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GEORGE WASHINGTON AND THE QUAKERS

By PAUL F. BOLLER, JR.*

George Washington was a soldier and a slaveholder and the Society of Friends was pacifist and emancipationist; it is not surprising, therefore, that the two should have clashed from time to time. Quaker historians, as well as eulogists of Washington, however, usually minimize these clashes, preferring instead to emphasize the genuine esteem which Washington and the Quakers developed for one another after the American Revolution. With Quaker writers the point has been that Washington came gradually to sympathize with Quaker views on war and slavery. Washington's admirers, for their part, have been eager to stress the first President's broad-minded, tolerant outlook and his ability to respect religious views, like those of the Quakers, which differed from his own.

Washington did indeed believe firmly in religious liberty and in the rights of conscience. Moreover, he developed a sincere dislike of both war and slavery during the Revolution. When Warner Mifflin sought him out, after he became President, to discuss slavery with him, he was treated with "kindness and

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respect" and reported afterwards that Washington showed some understanding of Quaker policy during the Revolutionary War. "Mr. Mifflin," Washington is reported as asking at one point, "will you please to inform me on what principle you were opposed to the revolution?" "Yes, friend Washington," replied Mifflin, "upon the same principles that I should be opposed to a change in this government — all that ever was gained by revolutions are not an adequate compensation to the poor mangled soldier for the loss of life or limb." After a moment's pause, Washington is said to have declared: "Mr. Mifflin, I honor your sentiments; there is more in that than mankind have generally considered."[1]

While there is no reason to question the sincerity of Washington's statement on that occasion, it would be a mistake to regard it as definitive as to his attitude toward the Quakers. Even after he came to deplore both war and slavery, there remained important residual differences between his opinions on these matters and those of the Society of Friends. It is easy to accumulate an imposing list of anti-war statements from Washington's writings, as some Quakers have done[2]; but it is equally necessary to remember that Washington was never a pacifist and that he mildly rebuked the Quakers when he was President for "declining to share with others the burthen of the common defense."[3] It is also not difficult to collect antislavery pronouncements from Washington's later years to show their consonance with the Quaker point of view; but it is at the same time important to realize that Washington was willing to bow to expediency in the matter, that he did not free his own slaves during his lifetime, and that he became annoyed whenever he thought the Quakers were pushing the antislavery cause too forcefully.

Washington, in short, came gradually to respect, but not to share the deepest principles animating the Society of Friends. He was, after all, a member of the Virginia aristocracy, reared in a society that accepted the established Anglican church as an essen-

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[1] *The Friend of Peace* (Cambridge, Massachusetts), II (January 1820), 8.

[2] See, for example, Katharine Smyth, "Quaker Contacts with Washington," *Friends Intelligencer,* LXXXIX (February 20, 1932), 144-146.

[3] Papers of George Washington, Library of Congress, CCCXXXIV, 52.

tial prop of social order, regarded the Quakers as a vexatious sectarian group, and looked upon war and slavery as inseparable parts of the natural order of things. His remark to Warner Mifflin takes on significance only if his early background is kept in mind. For it shows that Washington was capable of growth and that he was able to free himself from his earliest influences and develop respect for a religious group which rejected many of the basic institutions — the established church, war, and slavery — that he had been trained as a youth to accept.

There are no records of any contacts which Washington had with the Quakers when he was a boy, but he was probably familiar with them from an early age. His father may have told him about John Fothergill, the English Quaker who visited Virginia in 1721, who was entertained by the Washingtons, and who called Washington's father "a friendly man."[4] And he undoubtedly told the boy about the two trips he made to England (the second when George was about four years old) to discuss business with the English Quakers who were his partners in an enterprise for developing iron deposits in Maryland and Virginia.[5] The first Quaker of whom we have any record that Washington met personally, however, was Dr. William Hillary, an English doctor residing in the Barbados, whom his elder half-brother Lawrence consulted when the two of them went to the West Indies in 1751 for Lawrence's health. Washington did not identify Dr. Hillary as a Quaker in the journal he kept of the trip, but he was probably aware of the fact.[6]

Washington's first important encounter with the Quakers, however, did not come until the time of the French and Indian War, when he was serving as commander of all Virginia forces, with responsibility for frontier defenses. In 1756 six Quakers were drafted into the militia and sent to Winchester to fight under

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[4] Richard Hingston Fox, *Dr. John Fothergill and His Friends* (London, 1919), p. 8.

[5] Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington: A Biography* (New York, 1948-1954), I, 37-42, 55-57.

[6] E. M. Shilstone, "The Washingtons and their Doctors in Barbados," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society,* XX (February 1953), 71-80; John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799* (Boston, 1925), I, 22.

Washington. The young commander was genuinely perplexed by his first confrontation with Quaker pacifism. The six Quakers, he quickly learned, would "neither bear arms, work, receive provisions or pay, or do anything that tends, in any respect, to self-defense."[7] When Governor Dinwiddie advised him to "confine them with a short allowance of bread and water, till you bring them to reason,"[8] Washington reported that he "could by no means bring the Quakers to any terms. They chose rather to be whipped to death than bear arms, or lend us any assistance whatever upon the fort, or any thing of self-defense."[9] The Governor's final instructions were: "Use them with lenity, but as they are at their own expense, I would have them remain as long as the other Draughts."[10] In a final reference to the problem, Washington wrote that, in compliance with these orders, the Quakers "still remain here, and shall until the other drafts are discharged."[11]

Washington's treatment of the six Quakers has sometimes been cited as evidence of his early respect for the rights of conscience.[12] Actually, we know too little about the episode to draw any such conclusion. In any event, if Washington is to be commended for his forbearance, the Governor of Virginia must share in the commendation. Neither showed any special animus against the Quakers in their exchanges on the subject. There is, however, evidence that Virginia Quakers thought well of the young colonel. In July 1758, shortly before Washington's election to the House of Burgesses, a friend wrote to say of another candidate: "His interest I think declines among the Quakers, where I imagine your's is pretty good." This is the last record we have of Washington's relations with the Quakers until the American Revolution.[13]

Washington's first Revolutionary encounter with the Quakers

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[7] John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, D. C., 1931-1944), I, 394.

[8] Ibid., I, 394n.

[9] Ibid., I, 420.

[10] Ibid., I, 420n.

[11] Ibid., I, 462.

[12] Eliphalet Nott Potter, *Washington a Model in His Library and Life* (New York, 1895), p. 157.

[13] Smyth, "Quaker Contacts with Washington," loc. cit., p. 144.

took place during the siege of Boston. New England Quakers, assisted by donations from Quakers in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, organized a relief expedition to help the poor and needy in Boston and sent a committee of four to seek Washington's permission to enter the besieged city. Washington "received us kindly," Moses Brown, one of the chief planners of the project, said afterwards,

> but declined permitting us to go into Boston, saying he had made it a rule not to let any go in, unless it was a woman separated from her Husband or the like; but however, Showed a readiness, to further the designed distribution by proposing to send for some of our Friends to come out upon the lines . . . for a Conferance with them.[14]

The committee "concluded to adopt that method."[15] As Brown explained later: "as the Small Pox was in Town . . . our not being allowed to go in seemed a small or no disappointment."[16] The Quakers asked Washington for permission to write letters to General Howe explaining their plan and to two Quakers in Boston, through whom they hoped to distribute the relief, "which he concented to and proposed our shewing what we wrote to General Nathanael Greene."[17] Greene was a disowned Rhode Island Quaker whom Washington liked to tease about his pacifist background. "Sometimes," it was said, "Washington, who really loved a jest, would slyly remind him of his Quaker origin." As Brown recalled it, Washington told the committee: "Go to General Greene; he is a Quaker, and knows more about it than I do."[18] The committee accordingly "Waited on Nathanael," wrote the letters with his assistance, and submitted them to Washington that evening. Washington approved the letters and sent the Quakers on to the British lines under a flag of truce, where they

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[14] Moses Brown to William Wilson, Providence, 1st Mo. 2d, 1776, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* I (1877), 169.

[15] Mack E. Thompson, "Moses Brown's 'Account of Journey to Distribute Donations 12th Month 1775'," *Rhode Island History,* XV (October 1956), 113.

[16] *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.,* I, 170.

[17] *Rhode Island History,* XV, 113.

[18] George Washington Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene* (New York, 1867), I, 142-143.

arranged with General Howe for distributing funds among the war-sufferers of Boston.[19]

Moses Brown developed great admiration for Washington as a result of his conversations with him in December 1775. In after years he referred to him as a "great" man and spoke particularly of "his simple, easy manner."[20] And Washington's cordial reception of Brown and his associates and his "readiness" to co-operate in their undertaking testifies to his friendliness toward the Quakers (perhaps because of General Greene) during the early months of the war and to some appreciation of their pacifist-humanitarian principles.

With the Pennsylvania Quakers, however, Washington's relations were far less friendly. When the war shifted to Pennsylvania in 1777, Washington began to share the popular feeling among patriots generally that Quaker neutralism was, in essence, pro-British Toryism. It is true that in his correspondence with the Pennsylvania Council of Safety in January 1777 regarding the recruitment of men for the defense of Philadelphia, he took for granted the exemption of the "conscientiously scrupulous" from the draft and seems to have regarded this as unexceptionable.[21] By May 1777, however, he was identifying the Quakers with the "disaffected" generally, charging them with attempting to obstruct the operation of the militia laws, and urging that steps be taken to defeat their "evil intentions."[22] His distrust of the Quakers reached a climax during the British occupation of Philadelphia. On two occasions at this time, in giving orders for the impressment of supplies from the countryside, he instructed his officers to bear down especially upon the "unfriendly Quakers and others notoriously disaffected to the cause of American liberty."[23] When Quakers outside Philadelphia sought permission to send food into the city to help the needy during the British occupation, Washington flatly denied the re-

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[19] *Rhode Island History,* XV, 113.

[20] Augustine Jones, *Moses Brown: His Life and Services* (Providence, Rhode Island, 1892), p. 35.

[21] *Writings of Washington,* VII, 35, 79.

[22] Ibid., VIII, 44-45.

[23] Ibid., IX, 318; X, 120.

quest and refused even to see the delegation.[24] Moreover, in March 1778, he ordered his officers to prohibit Quakers outside Philadelphia from entering the city to attend a meeting of the Society. "This is an intercourse that we should by all means endeavour to interrupt," he declared, "as the plans settled at these meetings are of the most pernicious tendency."[25]

Still, on other occasions during the same critical period of the war, when Washington was faced with a "Quaker problem," he reacted with kindness and consideration. In the summer of 1777, for example, several Quakers in western Virginia were drafted into the militia and marched about two hundred miles with muskets tied to their backs to Washington's camp outside Philadelphia. "But on their coming to the camp," related one of the draftees, "and the state of their case being represented to General Washington, they were, by his order discharged, and liberty given them to return home."[26] Washington's action has understandably received high praise from Quaker historians.[27]

Washington's polite reception of six delegates from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting a few days after the battle of Germantown has also won much praise from Quaker writers. The purpose of the delegation was twofold: to protest the exile by Pennsylvania authorities of a number of leading Philadelphia Quakers to Winchester, Virginia, and to clear the Society of charges that it was transmitting intelligence to the British.[28] With them the delegates carried a "Testimony against War," explaining why the Quakers "are led out of all wars & Fightings," denying any "Correspondence highly prejudicial to the public Safety," and requesting that the Virginia exiles be restored "to their afflicted

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[24] MS Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Department of Records, 302 Arch St., Philadelphia, II, 140.

[25] *Writings of Washington,* XI, 114.

[26] "Memoirs of James Pemberton," *Friends' Miscellany,* VII (1835), 65.

[27] See James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America* (London, 1850-1854), II, 319-321; Isaac Sharpless, *A History of Quaker Government in Pennsylvania, 1682-1783* (Philadelphia, 1902), II, 168-169; Margaret E. Hirst, *The Quakers in Peace and War* (London, 1923), p. 396.

[28] For a detailed account see Thomas Gilpin, *Exiles in Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1848).

Families & Friends."[29] The delegates first visited General Howe, who received them good-naturedly, and then proceeded to Washington's camp, where they

> had a very full Opportunity of clearing the Society from the Aspersions, which had been invidiously raised against them, and distributed a number of the Testimonies amongst the Officers, who received and read them and made no objections.[30]

Warner Mifflin, apparently the leader of the group, was said to have been greeted by Washington "with open arms" and "entertained and made much of by everyone around."[31] By everyone, perhaps, but General Armstrong, who remarked waspishly the following day: "We lost a great part of yesterday with a deputation of Quakers from their yearly meeting."[32] The delegates later reported simply that "we were kindly entertained by General Washington,"[33] but another version of the conference has it that Mifflin told Washington boldly: "I am opposed to the revolution, and to all changes of government which occasion war and bloodshed."[34] If Mifflin said this, it seems not to have offended Washington, for, as Armstrong noted: "The General gave them dinner . . . for which they seemed very thankful." When the delegates broached the subject of the Quaker exiles, Washington explained that he had no authority to release them and suggested they get in touch with the Pennsylvania officials "who had banished their friends."[35] In reporting to the Yearly Meeting afterwards, the delegates insisted that

> Gen. Washington and all the Officers then present, being a pretty many, were fully satisfied as to Friends Clearness and we hope and believe . . . the Opportunity we had was useful many ways, there having been great

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[29] MS Minutes of Phila. Yearly Meeting, II, 382-384.

[30] Ibid., II, 415.

[31] St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain* (Paris, 1787), I, 213. The English version does not contain the passage on Warner Mifflin.

[32] General John Armstrong to President Thomas Wharton, October 8, 1777, *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, I, 392n.

[33] MS Minutes of Phila. Yearly Meeting, II, 415.

[34] *The Friend of Peace,* II, 8.

[35] *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, I, 393n.

Openness and many Observations upon various subjects to Edification and tending to remove and clear up some Prejudices which had been imbibed.[36]

Isaac Sharpless singled out Washington's courtesy toward the delegation as "abundant proof" of his good will toward the Quakers during the Revolution, remarking that "many a commander would have treated them with scant forbearance."[37]

The hospitality which Washington extended the wives of four of the exiles when they visited him in April 1778 to request his help in securing the release of the Winchester prisoners has also pleased Quaker writers. Washington had already assured the ladies of his willingness to assist them in their plan to send food, clothing, and medical supplies to the ailing prisoners, and indeed he had interceded with Governor Wharton on their behalf.[38] But the four ladies — Mary Pemberton, Elizabeth Drinker, Susanna Jones, and Mary Pleasants—wished to discuss the plight of the prisoners with him personally and, without receiving authorization of any kind, they left occupied Philadelphia and journeyed to his headquarters at Valley Forge. "We requested an audience with the General," Mrs. Drinker noted in her diary,

and sat with his wife, (a sociable, pretty kind of woman), until he came in. A number of officers were there who were very complaisant. . . . It was not long before G. Washington came, and discoursed with us freely, but not so long as we could have wished, as dinner was served, to which he invited us. . . . We had an elegant dinner, which was soon over, when we went out with ye Genls wife, up to her Chamber — and saw no more of him.[39]

Washington explained again that he had no jurisdiction over the prisoners, but he gave the ladies a pass to Lancaster, where they could press their suit before the state authorities. "As they seem much distressed," he wrote the Governor, "humanity pleads strongly in their behalf."[40] When the ladies reached Lancaster, they learned to their joy that the prisoners had been released the day before.

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[36] MS Minutes of Phila. Yearly Meeting, II, 415.

[37] Sharpless, *Quaker Government in Pennsylvania,* II, 169.

[38] *Writings of Washington,* XI, 221.

[39] Henry D. Biddle, ed., *Extracts from the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker* (Philadelphia, 1889), p. 93.

[40] *Writings of Washington,* XI, 223-224.

Washington received many compliments, both at the time and afterwards, for "the most cordial manner" in which he entertained his unexpected visitors. His amiable reception of the "four courageous Quaker women" is commonly regarded as conclusive evidence that he did not share the animosity toward the Quakers prevailing among the patriots.[41] Even the exiles believed that Washington's sympathies were with them. When they reached his headquarters on their way back from Virginia, late in April, and requested and received his permission to cross American lines into Philadelphia, "we esteemed it a proof," said one of the prisoners, "of the General's sense of justice and politeness."[42] Actually, there is little evidence of any real concern for the Virginia exiles in any of this. Even General Israel Putnam, who thoroughly disliked the Quakers, would probably have treated the ladies — certainly the seventy-five-year-old Mrs. Pemberton — courteously.[43] As for allowing the prisoners to return to Philadelphia, what else could Washington have done once they had been released by the state? That he continued to distrust the Quakers until the end of the war is apparent in his adamant refusal in 1781 to permit a delegation of New England Friends to visit Quaker meetings on Long Island.[44]

It is clear that Washington, as his prompt release of the Virginia draftees shows, was willing to respect the religious scruples of the Quakers against bearing arms during the Revolution. What he could not understand, however, was the insistence of Pennsylvania Quakers (who seem to have been more uncompromising than Quakers elsewhere) upon total abstention from the independence movement to which he was so firmly dedicated. They would not bear arms, of course; but neither would they hold

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[41] Carl Leopold Baurmeister, *Revolution in America: Confidential Letters and Journals, 1776-1784* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1957), p. 168; Gilpin, *Exiles in Virginia,* p. 45; Sharpless, *Quaker Government in Pennsylvania,* II, 167-169; Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War,* pp. 408-409.

[42] Gilpin, *Exiles in Virginia,* p. 232.

[43] William Farrand Livingston, *Israel Putnam, Pioneer, Ranger, and Major-General* (New York, 1901), pp. 330-331.

[44] Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London, 1923), p. 260.

office under the revolutionary government of Pennsylvania, affirm allegiance to it, pay its taxes, or even handle its paper money.[45] Washington, like most patriots, wrongly concluded from this that the Quakers wanted the British to win the war and perhaps were even secretly aiding them. Although, unlike many of his associates in the army and in Congress, he strove to treat them with fairness and decency, he could never quite convince himself that they were not guilty of "evil intentions" toward the American cause. Quakers have surely exaggerated his friendship for them during the Revolution.

After the Revolution, however, Washington quickly revised his opinion of the Pennsylvania Quakers, partly, no doubt, because of their hearty support of the new Federal Constitution. "No person has spoken to me with more impartiality respecting the Quakers than General Washington . . ." declared Brissot de Warville after a conversation with him in 1788.

> He declared to me, that, in the course of the war, he had entertained an ill opinion of this society; he knew but little of them . . . and he attributed to their political sentiments, the effect of their religious principles. He told me, that having since known them better, he acquired an esteem for them; and that considering the simplicity of their manners, the purity of their morals, their exemplary oeconomy and their attachment to the constitution, he considered this society as one of the best supports of the new government.[46]

In October 1789, when the Philadelphia Quakers sent a delegation to New York to congratulate Washington on his elevation to the presidency and to present him with a copy of Barclay's *Apology,* Washington seized the opportunity to announce publicly both his high regard for the Quakers and his firm support of the rights of conscience.[47]

> Government being, among other purposes, instituted to protect the persons and consciences of men from oppression, it is certainly the duty of Rulers, not only to abstain from it themselves, but according to their stations, to prevent it in others. The liberty enjoyed by the People of these States of

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[45] Ibid., p. 564.

[46] Brissot de Warville, *New Travels in the United States of America, Performed in 1788* (New York, 1792), pp. 415-416.

[47] MS Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings, III, 147.

worshipping Almighty God agreeable to their consciences is not only among the choicest of their *blessings,* but also of their *rights.* . . .

Your principles and conduct are well known to me, and it is doing the People called Quakers no more than justice to say, that (except their declining to share with others the burthen of the common defence) there is no denomination among us, who are more exemplary and useful citizens.

I assure you very explicitly that in my opinion the conscientious scruples of all men should be treated with great delicacy and tenderness, and it is my wish and desire that the laws may always be as extensively accomodated to them, as a due regard to the Protection and essential interests of the nation may justify and permit.[48]

While the Quakers could not agree with everything in Washington's statement, they were delighted with his concern for the "conscientious scruples of all men" and pleased that he read his reply to their address in person, "which was considered a particular mark of respect as 'tis customary for one of his secretaries to read the answers."[49] In France, the *Patriote Français,* reporting the exchange, italicized Washington's characterization of the Quakers as "exemplary and useful citizens" and commented: "This opinion of the most impartial and best informed judge in America, will, we hope, close the mouths of the slanderers of the Quakers."[50]

Nevertheless, even after Washington's "formal reconciliation"[51] with the Quakers after the Revolution, he was frequently irritated by their antislavery activities. Washington had come to deplore slavery during the Revolution and after the war he expressed more than once his conviction that the institution "by degrees assuredly ought" to be abolished "by Legislative authority."[52] But he held more than two hundred slaves until his death (his will provided for freeing them after the death of his wife) and he firmly upheld the right of owners to their property in slaves, pending the adoption of some plan of gradual emancipation by law. He was, moreover, anxious that the union of the states effected by the Constitution not be jeopardized by a too-vigorous agitation of the antislavery issue. His—what shall we say,

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[48] Papers of George Washington, CCCXXXIV, 52.

[49] Susanna Dillwyn to her father, 11 mo. 4, 1789, *Friends Intelligencer,* CVI (1949), 700.

[50] "Quakers d'Amérique," *Patriote Français,* January 8, 1790.

[51] Hirst, *Quakers in Peace and War,* p. 144.

[52] *Writings of Washington,* XXVIII, 424.

moderate?—views on slavery inevitably clashed with those of the Quakers.[53]

In 1786 Washington complained bitterly of the efforts of Philadelphia Quakers to liberate a slave belonging to a resident of Alexandria, Virginia, who was visiting the city.[54] Nor did he take kindly to a petition ("a very mal-apropos one it was") which the Quakers sent Congress in 1790, urging an immediate end to the slave trade. Alarmed by the bitterness which the petition aroused in the South, he was obviously relieved when the question, after a stormy debate in Congress, was finally "put to sleep."[55] "The introduction of the Memorial respecting Slavery," he told a Virginia friend, "was to be sure, not only an illjudged piece of business but occasioned a great waste of time." He did, however, refuse to join his friend in denouncing Congress for discussing the slavery problem and reminded him of "the great dereliction of Slavery in a large part of this Union."[56] Furthermore, when Warner Mifflin called on him about this time to explain the views of the Quakers on slavery, he heard him out with sympathy and respect.[57] The fact is that Washington was finding his position as slaveholder increasingly distasteful and his references to the subject in his later years reveal a feeling of embarrassment about his own personal involvement in the slave system. One can't help believing that he breathed a sigh of relief as he wrote out a provision for emancipating his slaves in his will. The Quakers were overjoyed when they learned the contents of his will; they "felt they had won a most important point in the campaign for Freedom."[58]

If Washington was bothered by the antislavery activities of the Quakers, he seems to have looked favorably upon their efforts on behalf of the Indians. In March 1793, when he was making plans

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[53] For an examination of Washington's views on slavery, see Walter H. Mazyck, *George Washington and the Negro* (Washington, 1932).

[54] Washington to Robert Morris, Mount Vernon, April 12, 1786, *Writings of Washington,* XXVIII, 407-408.

[55] *Writings of Washington,* XXXI, 30.

[56] Washington to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790, *Writings of Washington,* XXXI, 50-52.

[57] *The Friend of Peace,* II, 8; *Diaries of Washington,* II, 8.

[58] Robert M. Hazelton, *Let Freedom Ring! A Biography of Moses Brown* (New York, 1957), pp. 120-121.

for a peace conference with the western Indians at Sandusky, seven members of the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings called to ask permission for a deputation of Quakers to be present at the treaty in an unofficial capacity. When the Quakers explained that they would not "interfere in any shape with the political business of the treaty, their sole end being to effect peace by impressing upon the Ind. the necessity & advantages of it," Washington told them that

> the first wish of his heart in this business, being to promote peace between the Indians & the U. S. he should be very happy to give every facility in his power to whatever might tend to promote a peace upon honorable & just terms — and that he could see no impropriety in these persons attending the treaty, upon the principles mentioned.[59]

Late the following month, three of the Quakers who were "to attend the Treaty" visited Washington a few hours before departing from Philadelphia in order to reassure him

> that they shd. in no shape interfere in the political points or matters of boundary to be settled at the treaty; their sole object being to endeavour to impress [upon] the minds of the Indians the advantages of peace & the blessings of civilization. — The President approved their intentions & hoped they might be crowned with Success.[60]

The "Sandusky Conference," as it turned out, was not "crowned with Success." In the end there was only one short, inconclusive interview with the Indians on July 31 near Detroit. Washington was disappointed but not surprised at the failure of the conference and he continued to be friendly to the work of the Quakers among the Indians. In 1796 he approved the "object and intentions" of the Indian Committee of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting[61] and shortly before retiring from office he "recommended the Indians to attend to the voice of the Quakers, who were peaceable people and friends of Indians."[62]

Generally conservative in outlook, the Philadelphia Quakers were firm supporters of the Washington administration.[63] Dr.

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[59] Papers of George Washington, CCCXXXVII, 85-86.

[60] Ibid., 104.

[61] MS Minutes of Indian Committee, Phila. Yearly Meeting, I, 13.

[62] Ibid., 45.

[63] Frederick B. Tolles, *George Logan of Philadelphia* (New York, 1953), p. 108.

George Logan of Stenton, however, disagreed violently with the political views of his fellow Quakers. An agrarian democrat of the Jeffersonian persuasion, Logan eventually clashed both with the Philadelphia Quakers and with Washington himself. Logan had once been on good terms with Washington and the two had spent a pleasant Sunday together at Stenton in July 1787, exchanging views on agriculture.[64] After Washington became President, however, Logan aligned himself with the Jeffersonians, denounced the Hamiltonian policies of the Washington administration, entertained Citizen Genêt at Stenton, fumed against Jay's Treaty with England, and even voted against a congratulatory address prepared by the Pennsylvania Assembly on the occasion of Washington's retirement from office. His Quaker associates were shocked by the vehemence with which he voiced his opinions, there was a falling-out between the two, and in 1791 he was disowned for associating himself for a time with the local militia.[65] But Logan remained a Quaker at heart (toward the end of his life he began attending Quaker meetings again[66]) and when, in 1798, following the "X Y Z" affair, the United States seemed on the verge of war with France, he journeyed to Paris to see what he could do to prevent a rupture between the two nations.

Washington would have welcomed Dr. Logan's support of his own efforts to preserve peace with England at the time of Jay's Treaty in 1794. In 1798, however, convinced of France's hostile designs on the United States, he had donned his uniform again and agreed to head the army that the Adams administration was raising in preparation for war with France. Logan returned from France in November with assurances from high French officials that they sincerely desired peace. He was coldly received by Secretary of State Pickering and then, since President Adams was out of town, he decided to seek out Washington, who was in Philadelphia conferring with his military staff.[67] It was an egregious blunder. Washington was outraged by Logan's cavalier dis-

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[64] Deborah Logan, *Memoir of Dr. George Logan,* ed. Frances A. Logan (Philadelphia, 1899), pp. 44-45.

[65] Tolles, *George Logan,* p. 108.

[66] Ibid., p. 309.

[67] Ibid., pp. 175-176.

regard for normal diplomatic channels as well as by his apparent bias toward France and he received him with a studied indifference that bordered on boorishness. Afterwards, in a rare action, he wrote out a long memorandum of his conversation with Logan, every sentence of which breathes hostility toward his former host at Stenton.[68] President Adams, however, received Logan more cordially when he returned to Philadelphia at the end of November, and Logan's report played some part in Adams' decision to resume diplomatic relations with France.[69]

There is something ironic in the fact that Washington's last recorded contact with a Quaker should have been so unpleasant. For in the years since the Revolution there had been a real rapprochement between Washington and the Philadelphia Quakers. When news of Washington's death in December 1799 reached Philadelphia, one of the Quakers referred to him as a "bright Occidental Star" at First Day meeting, and even Elizabeth Drinker, the only Quaker whom we know to have resented his attitude toward the Quakers during the Revolution, expressed genuine sorrow at his passing.[70] What adds to the irony is the fact that the Quaker with whom Washington clashed in 1798, unlike the majority of Quakers, held views on war which Washington could understand. Logan "thought all war unlawful to a Christian," according to his wife, "except that which was strictly of a defensive kind."[71] And Washington's Deist views had led him to a similar position. Both were essentially men of peace, anxious that the young nation avoid embroilment in the wars of Europe. But Washington had striven courageously as President to avoid a pointless war with England by supporting the unpopular Jay's Treaty in the face of bitter opposition from Republicans like Logan. And Logan worked hard to prevent an equally needless war with France amid angry hostility from Federalists like Washington. Politics seems to have overwhelmed principle in each

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[68] Memorandum of an Interview, Tuesday, November 13, 1798, *Writings of Washington,* XXXVII, 18-20.

[69] Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams* (Boston, 1850-1856), IX, 244.

[70] Biddle, ed., *Journal of Elizabeth Drinker,* pp. 352-354.

[71] Charles J. Ingersoll, *Recollections, Historical, Political, and Social* (Philadelphia, 1861), I, 230.

instance. To cap the irony, John Adams, who had little liking for either the Quakers or France (and who later signed the "Logan Act") listened to what Logan had to say and decided to risk a split in his party by renewing efforts for peace with France.

The Logan episode aside, Washington's associations with the Quakers from the French and Indian War onward were, on the whole, remarkably pleasant. What is noteworthy, in fact, is not that relations between the two should have been frequently strained, but that they should have been as agreeable, by and large, as they were. There is much in the attitude of Washington, the slaveowner and military leader, toward this pacifist and abolitionist group that does him credit. Although, as he admitted, he had "an ill opinion" of the Quakers during the Revolution, this did not prevent him from treating them in most instances with courtesy and consideration. And after the war he learned, as he told them, that pacifists could be "exemplary and useful citizens." It was as good citizens that Washington seems chiefly to have admired the Quakers. As he told Brissot de Warville, he was impressed by "the simplicity of their manners, the purity of their morals, their exemplary oeconomy and their attachment to the constitution." Not all Americans were disposed to be as kindly toward the Quakers after the Revolution. As late as 1833 one writer was still denouncing the "twistical proceedings" of the Quakers during the Revolution and heaping ridicule on their friendly exchange of addresses with Washington in 1789.[72] But Washington looked upon them as "one of the best supports of the new government." And by the example he set in his respect for the "conscientious scruples" of the Society of Friends he undoubtedly helped, with his immense prestige, to "close the mouths of the slanderers of the Quakers," as the *Patriote Français* put it, during the early years of the Republic.

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[72] Samuel Hanson Cox, *Quakerism not Christianity* (Boston, 1833), p. 246.

OTHNIEL ALSOP'S LETTER BOOK

By MARION BALDERSTON*

On the first of August, 1793, Othniel Alsop and his brother John sailed from London on the *William Penn* to become, in time, part of America's solid, prosperous middle class. They had a long Quaker background and a good education. Their father, Scrivener Alsop, had come from Colchester, Essex, to London to be Steward of the Friends School and Workhouse at Clerkenwell. Othniel attended that school and served an apprenticeship to a staymaker, after which he applied for and received the "usual gratuity" from the school committee and embarked for America to make his fortune.

Nothing could have been more discouraging than the start. The great Yellow Fever plague was raging in Philadelphia; ships would not dock there, and the Alsops were landed on the Jersey shore. They found temporary employment, however, as schoolteachers—"Thwackems," they said slangily—and managed, as Othniel wrote, to pass the winter agreeably. Plague and the embargo of 1794 made correspondence difficult, but Othniel wrote back to England when he could. He copied his letters into a letter book, which has stayed in the family. For forty-two years his letters went to his brother Robert, his sisters Ann, Mary, and Judith, later to his nephews and nieces. The dates run from 1794 to 1836, and the letters give not only a picture of a young city and country growing up but also the reactions of a young Quaker from the Old World to this experiment in democracy.

The first letter, written to Ann in the spring of '94, is the only one in which he used the elaborate, stilted eighteenth-century idiom. It was in answer to a protest that he might forget his family.

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*Marion Balderston lives in San Marino, California. Her husband, the late John L. Balderston, was the great-great-grandson of Othniel Alsop (1770-1836), whose letter book forms the basis of this article.

"Canst thou, Dear Sister, suppose that want of affection has been the occasion of my long silence? . . . I believe thou wilt not entertain such an Idea concerning thy Brother. Fraternal kinship too manifestly displayed itself in his general conduct to leave room for such a suspicion—so short an absence could not possibly destroy what a series of years has so deeply rooted." A little more of this led Othniel into a brief sermon and the assurance that they would recognize each other in Heaven "if happily we attain to such a state as to be favored with an admission into the Realm of uninterrupted Felicity." Towards the end of the letter he gives the family a little of the news which one imagines they were really anxious to hear.

Both in this letter and in the half-dozen which follow he repeats the one fact that struck him most forcibly: "Here Liberty Reigns Triumphant—what a man has earned is his own." The people he found plain and friendly and hospitable, and, as the brothers had arrived with letters from such eminent preachers as George Dillwyn and Samuel Emlen, they had no trouble getting into commercial life, once the Yellow Fever had left Philadelphia. First John, then Othniel, worked in the countinghouse of Henry Drinker, of the firm of James and Drinker, and they boarded with a pleasant family nearby.

"Altho' upwards of 4000 souls were summoned from this city last fall," wrote Othniel, referring to the plague, "yet there are now far more inhabitants than at any previous time, and no wonder, if we consider what numbers are driven from the different European territories by Political Feuds." He finally got around to describing Philadelphia itself:

> The situation of this place is extremely pleasant, lying on the westward side of the river Delaware, which is here about three-quarters of a mile wide . . . the streets, with but one exception [Dock Street] are straight and broad and cross each other at right angles . . . forming the town into regular squares, which are again intersected by Courts and Alleys. The Market Place, which runs up High Street, which is the centre street running up from the river, is perhaps the handsomest in the world, and is supplied with both clean and unclean animals and vegetables.[1] The distance

[1] The unclean animals, he later explained to his brother Robert, were "bears, raccoons, opossums, squirrels and other Vermin which no one in England would dream of eating," but here they were considered dainties.

between Delaware and Schuylkill is here about two miles . . . they have built only from Delaware, but the rapid increase of population will, I doubt not, occasion its extension full as far as the Founder ever expected.

He described the variety of people on the streets, of every shade from jet black to very fair, many fleeing from the scourge of war to find asylum in this land of Liberty and Peace. "Here probably thou wilt ask—Can Peace exist in a country distressed by the ravages of a war?" Othniel evidently had had letters asking about the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, for he hurried to explain that it was "an Evil of small magnitude" compared to the carnage even then going on in Europe.

A parcel of Deluded People, chiefly Irish settlers on the Western Frontier of this State, brought up in gross Ignorance and never accustomed to think for Themselves, have, by a few disappointed factious men been taught to believe themselves dreadfully oppressed, because the Legislature manifested a determined resolution to exact an excise on Distilled Spirituous Liquors, which they had levied some time before, and had been persuaded that if they made an open Resistance to the execution of the law, a majority of the Citizens of the United States would declare in their favour.

This led Othniel into a digression on the wickedness of foreign governments in allowing thousands to be slaughtered to gratify the avarice and ambition of a few, and so back to the more virtuous American government: "Tho' the Legislature endeavoured by the gentlest means to Convince these People of their egregious folly, yet when they found mild measures tended but to add Insolence to Delinquency, a number of Volunteers stepped forth in defence of the insulted Laws of their Country, and marched back to quell these mighty Champions of Sedition, who are now slinking away —as many as can." To another correspondent he explained that the rebellious folk in the neighborhood of Pittsburgh were "great folk for Whiskey, being principally Irish Settlers of the Lower Class, hence used more Whiskey than their neighbours."

Othniel admired the way Philadelphians turned out to fight a fire. He described the burning of the German Lutheran Church on Fourth Street, which he called the most elegant in the city.[2] "As

[2] Henry Drinker's wife Elizabeth also watched the fire and wrote in her diary (December 26, 1794) that the organ alone had cost £3500. *Extracts from the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker,* ed. Henry D. Biddle (Philadelphia, 1889), p. 255.

soon as the alarm is spread," he wrote, "all the bells are set to work, and the men turn out from all parts of the Town, with their Buckets, of which there are several in most Houses, and form themselves into double Rows from the Pumps to the engines, one Row passing along the full Buckets, which are then emptied and handed back by the other; as they are careful to keep their Ranks unbroken the Engines are supplied by this means in a very expeditious manner, but not so well as from the Fire Plugs of London." This was the second time he had acknowledged that London had something superior to Philadelphia. The first was just after his arrival, when he wrote that the country round about was not so pretty as in England.

But neither John nor Othniel ever had a moment's regret about leaving the old country. The summer's heat was not too hot, nor the winter's storms too cold; both men had better health than in England. In less than two years Othniel was investing money to import goods and making mild speculations in land, not to farm, but only to sell. The idea of farming in America had originally occurred to him, he explained to his friend William Marsden in 1795, because of a chance meeting in England with a couple going out to farm. As his business of staymaking was not very profitable, he and John had decided to go along. The farm scheme had fallen through on the ship, however, the couple proving disagreeable, and the woman, who was supposed to cook for them on board, being so useless that they had to cook for her. "Let me tell thee," he added, "I was egregiously deceived respecting Stay-making, which is a miserable poor business here—the Women having mostly left off the use of them. I think a Woman never looks so well as when fitted with Stays, yet I cannot but commend the disuse of them—certainly they are very injurious to Health. I know I have frequently laced them up till the wearers could hardly move or breathe, yet still they must be made a little less to allow for stretching."

Manners and customs in Pennsylvania he found much like those at home, yet some were queer to a stranger. "To see everybody Barefoot has a strange appearance . . . in the country shoes and stockings were only worn in the winter, even in Philadelphia boys and girls went barefoot and the girls without caps." Those

who came over, he wrote, must learn to go without supper. He recalled their very first invitation to tea. They ate sparingly, English-fashion, only to find later that this was also the evening meal, and they went hungry to bed. So they had learned to take cheese or hung-beef or fish with their tea, even though they didn't like it. But Othniel liked the shad, which were running up the Delaware even as he was writing and being caught by the thousands in the nets. "The use of Spirituous Liquors, formerly very prevalent, is on the Decline," he observed with approval. "The diabolic traffic in our fellow-creatures the Africans is also much on the Decline," and societies were being formed to help these unfortunates. But one American custom he could not approve. If a young man went calling at a house where there were girls, he noted, the old people presently went off to bed. The young man then moved over beside one of the girls, and "the other girls, taking the hint, decamp." This was known as "sparking," and it was very popular.

Othniel's insistence on the superiority of everything American evidently caused some friends from the other side to tease him. So in the latter part of 1795, when he had been in America just two years, he admitted that there was some political trouble, though, as in the Whiskey Rebellion, he blamed it on the vulgar and the jealous. John Jay had just returned with the English Treaty. "The Sons of Anarchy began to predispose the public mind for what was to follow," he wrote. What followed was near-riots and the hanging of Jay in effigy with the Treaty round his neck. The rabble had objected to sending an envoy at all: after all, we had won the war; we should have *demanded* war damages from Great Britain, which was in no state to refuse. "Don't we talk big!" Othniel commented. The Senate deliberated the unpopular treaty in private. This, he remarked ironically, annoyed the "Sovereign People," who said that republics should have no secrets, that they should be able to follow every step of a debate and to protest, if they wanted, while it was in progress. At which point "a Senator, a furious Democrat, let the Cat out of the Bag, by furnishing a Printer with a copy" of the discussions, and the excitement became even more intense. This whole affair has a modern ring to it. But Othniel added that sane men thought the Treaty good on the whole; and then, as if afraid of showing his more conservative attitude, he

went back to the European nations that were tearing each other to pieces.

There were few letters in 1796. Othniel spent part of that year on the road. At one time he traveled more than two hundred miles back into Pennsylvania, and in the winter he rode south on horseback as far as the new Federal City a-building on the Potomac, and back through York and Lancaster, "a tour of about 550 miles." He thus missed an intensely cold Philadelphia winter. "The Delaware was open the 22nd [of December]," he wrote, "but next morning people walked over the ice to the opposite City —loaded teams passed over and it had every appearance of a highroad. . . . There were several taverns built on the ice." The ice had broken just before his return from the south.

He did not mention the specific reason for either trip, but it was undoubtedly business. John had become a "flour factor," and he himself was partner in a firm importing dry goods and hardware. It was not the best time, he admitted, to go into trade, the French in retaliation for Jay's Treaty, "having come to the shameful resolution to seize all Vessels bound to or from English ports, in consequence of which many Americans have been already captured." If the French, he added, "make enemies of the Americans, they may do themselves more harm than they are aware of. . . . it looks as if a rupture with France was highly probable." He would have more to say about the war the United States nearly got itself into with its late ally.

The same letter, dated March 1797, told of the retirement of George Washington as President, to be succeeded by John Adams. He was greatly moved to "observe the *President* of a great *Nation,* after holding the helm of Administration from the time when she first rose to Independence to her great prosperity, voluntarily to resign that honorable Post to return to private life" — which led him back to his favorite theme of wicked monarchs grasping after power and to "England, where even an Election for Representative of a petty Borough is attended with bloody noses and broken bones."

When I contemplate this great Character [Washington] I cannot but wonder at the contrarieties which exist in Man. . . . Is it not almost incredible that a Man whose general conduct has created universal ad-

miration — who has firmly stood the undoubted Champion of Civil Liberty . . . whose prudent, humane, benevolent disposition has almost invariably been displayed . . . is it not astonishing that *such a Man* should nevertheless hold in abject slavery several hundreds of his fellow-creatures? *Yet such is the fact.*[3] . . . When I look at this, I am astonished indeed that Slavery should exist in such a country as this when the Constitution declares every Man free. . . . The introduction of the Africans into this country has been—humanity aside—a highly impolitic measure, for besides the miserable condition to which this class of our fellow-men have been thereby reduced, the whites, living on the *fruits* of *their* labour have become habituated to idleness, thinking industry disgraceful since it puts them on a level with *Negroes,* thus they waste their time in gaming and reveling.

The Yellow Fever had broken out again, though far less virulently than in '93. Othniel remained in an almost deserted town; John took his young wife away, and his brother reported to him by letter, telling him about the closed shops, the scarcity of flour, the deaths of various friends. Most deaths occurred along Front Street or Water Street, or the mosquito-ridden, swampy southern districts, but it was to be a long time before any doctor suspected a connection.

By 1798 Othniel was certain there would be a war with France. "Ports and harbours are to be more strongly fortified, a number of Cannon founderies are now at work . . . the president to raise a standing army of 20,000 . . . voluntary associations forming with enthusiastic ardour. . . . The old Veteran patriot *Washington* again steps from his solitude and accepts the command of the Armies of America . . . a number of Armed Vessels have been put in commission to protect our Coast" — and more to this effect in a most un-Quakerlike tone. "Thus France will find that instead of being able to *divide and destroy* here, as in most places where her arms have been carried, the great mass of people seeing thro' her . . . are ready to join in a great phalanx against her."

The Yellow Fever returned again this summer of '98. Othniel's letters are full of lists of the friends who died, the worst

[3] If Othniel read Washington's will a few years later, he would have found that there were 124 slaves and that they were to be set free. But he still would not have condoned the ownership during Washington's lifetime.

cases, as usual, around the docks. He himself came down with what was obviously a light attack. He almost gave up and sent for a physician, but fortunately did not, and so escaped the blistering, bloodletting, and physicking which were standard remedies for everything. He left for the country, taking the cat with him. In town the deaths ran from eighty to a hundred a day, and some enterprising burglar, taking advantage of the distracted state of things, broke into the Bank of Pennsylvania and stole $100,000. When the plague returned the following year, Othniel made no attempt to stay in town, but, taking all the yard goods out of his store, moved it and himself to Woodbury, New Jersey. He did not mention the cat.

In 1800 he described the building of the Water Works in Philadelphia:

> Among other improvements going forward here at this time, a plan long since agitated for supplying the City generally with wholesome water, is carrying into effect with great spirit. On an elevated spot near the banks of the Schuylkill, a steam engine is building, which is to throw water from a Basin so constructed at its entrance as to admit none of the tide water, into a brick culvert brought a considerable depth underground to a public square about half way between Schuylkill and Delaware, in the centre of which a handsome edifice is raised tho' not completed. This is intended to contain another steam engine to raise the water from the culvert to a Reservoir in the upper part of the Building, of sufficient elevation to force water through Pipes — constructed on the same principles and laid in the same manner as those in London — to all parts of the City, and to the tops of the Houses if wanted.

For the next four years Othniel's book contains more business than family letters — the finest flour was $5.75 a barrel; middlings and scrapings, $5.25; Russian sheeting, $18.00 a pair. Late in 1803 he came down with the Yellow Fever. But it was not so severe that year, and he was no doubt a little immunized by his previous illness. He recovered and gave the doctors the credit.

In 1806 Othniel married Hannah Brown; he was then in his mid-thirties. "Give me leave to introduce to you a new sister-in-law, even my wife Hannah," he wrote. "I would describe her but don't know how. Let me consider—just my own height—of perfect shape — handsome countenance—darkish Hair and Eyes — Disposition amiable—a careful, prudent housewife—and one of

whom everybody speaks well. Her age, twenty-eight." Two years later he wrote: "I have found one whose value is above Rubies. We had a son about 12 months ago but he died without a Name. Many heavy losses in the mercantile firm . . . determined me to quit. I now keep a vinegar, wine and tea warehouse. My principal business is vinegar making; having a considerable business in that line and the prospect is flattering."

But the "flattering" prospect was illusory. There was a long gap in the correspondence. Finally, in 1809, Othniel explained it to his favorite sister Judith: "I daresay my beloved sister will readily recollect that I never was apt to trouble my friends with my complaints . . . when therefore I tell thee that by placing too much confidence in faithless men I became involved in losses . . . but, thank God, the business I am now engaged in . . . is one I have not much doubt I shall get along [in] with Safety and Satisfaction." But Othniel was still not entirely out of trouble. It was the period of the Embargo and Non-Intercourse Acts. Foreign trade was suspended; there was no contact with England except by infrequent packet boats from New York. But in January 1812, "my children being put to bed," he settled down to renew the correspondence. Business had been so bad that he had called his creditors together and laid everything before them, expecting them to take over everything he owned. Instead, they accepted fifteen percent on the pound, payable in installments, taking his note and no security. Confining his business entirely to vinegar, he had met these and already had paid over $1000 on the balance.

By now he had three children, Rebecca, Robert, and George. "The name of my youngest I wish to be a memento to a man to whom I owe more than to any man on earth—George Morris, merchant of this city. He stepped forward as my friend when those I considered my best friends had withdrawn themselves . . . his purse and his credit have at all times been at my service. He is a Scotch man and a Presbyterian, I am an Englishman and a Quaker. Some would think two such characters would hardly come in contact[4] . . . thou wishest to know how to direct thy future letters; *Othniel Alsop, Philadelphia,* is quite sufficient. I am well enough

[4] Mr. Morris later set his namesake up in trade.

known to render any addition altogether superfluous." Business was apparently looking up.

Later in 1812 he wrote his brother Robert: "Our country and yours being now at war, conveyance for letters will no doubt become difficult." He went on to deplore the war, but this time for economic, not religious, reasons:

> It was a maxim of the great Chatham that England ought to make it to the interest of America not to manufacture even a Horse Shoe Nail. How her statesmen could be induced to pursue a line of conduct so diametrically opposite is astonishing . . . it has been admitted in Parliament that in cottons we might possibly succeed to a certain extent, but as to woolens, it was utterly out of the question. . . . I shall mention some returns, under our Third Census. Incomplete as they naturally are, it appears that Vermont contains 450,000 sheep, Massachusetts 399,182; Connecticut 400,000, Pennsylvania 466,918; to say nothing of other states.

So much was thought of the wool trade, he went on, that even when a man's goods were seized for debts, he was allowed to keep six sheep. "One man from Connecticut, Thomas Rotch, removed last summer to the state of Ohio with a flock of 300 merino sheep, intending to turn his attention exclusively to the raising of them."[5] The war was obviously having a stimulating effect on American economic life. There were 530 cotton mills, he wrote, working 100,000 spindles, on an average spinning 400,000 to 500,000 pounds of yarn, enough to weave 18,000,000 yards of cotton cloth, three-quarters of a yard wide—and this was independent of the cotton spun and woven in the homes! Othniel must have had a book of statistics before him. He went on: fulling mills, carding machines, gunpowder mills, forges, furnaces, saltpetre. He even had the figures on the number of straw bonnets. From Ohio alone 3,000,000 pounds of maple sugar, and of "ardent spirits" the prodigious quantity of 23,720,000 gallons yearly. America, he said, was amply able to provide for herself throughout any war.

He managed to get a few letters to England during the fight-

[5] Thomas Rotch (1767-1823), a Friend, originally of Nantucket, had moved from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Hartford, Connecticut, in 1800, and thence in 1811 to Ohio, where he supervised the laying out of the town of Kendal (now part of Massillon) and later established a woolen factory.

ing; they went by way of New York and Lisbon. In the winter of 1813 he described a new type of epidemic, at first called spotted fever and later typhus, which struck suddenly, violently, and usually fatally. "Our physicians prescribe as much wine and ardent spirits as the patient can bear," he wrote Ann; "bleeding they esteem fatal"—which was the first ray of medical common sense. The epidemic at first left the towns alone and spread only in the country, but the following year Othniel caught it and was many months recovering.

For some months family news crowded out all other items—brother John's eight children and his own five; then, fairly quickly, the deaths of John's wife and his own beloved Hannah. Then John's death from a dysentery, which also carried off his two youngest sons and very nearly killed two of his daughters. A more cheerful note appeared some years later when he made a sensible re-marriage with a widow, Sarah Waring, *née* Coleman, who had come over from England in 1795 and belonged to Abington Meeting. This marriage, on March 14, 1824, came in time for her to help nurse his son Thomas through a long, mysterious illness with high fever and a swollen leg. Othniel wrote sadly that not all the bleeding, blistering, purging, and leeching had helped—evidence that the doctors were at it again!

In 1824 he noted the beginnings of the controversy which was to divide Philadelphia Quakerism for a century and a quarter. "Two years ago," he wrote sister Ann, Elias Hicks, preaching in Philadelphia, had "sowed the seeds of Briars and Thorns which have been producing a plentiful crop." To Othniel it was "notorious" that the Long Island minister had "long been labouring cunningly to undermine the foundations of Christian Faith . . . yet such is the infatuated attachment of a large number of members of our Society that the evidence of his unsoundness went for nothing." As the controversy went on to its sad and bitter climax, he could note with satisfaction that Philadelphia itself was "preserved for the Truth," but he had to record sorrowfully that the Hicksites claimed seven of the eleven Quarterly Meetings around the city. Abington in particular was a somewhat rowdy Hicksite stronghold: on one occasion the regular members were locked out of the meetinghouse and had to hold their meeting sitting on the grass under the trees. It was small consolation to Othniel to report

in 1830 that Hicks had died after a stroke, for he had many disciples to carry on his teachings. Moreover, "an Italian Statuary" had actually exhumed the body and made a plaster cast of the face. Now, said Othniel bitterly, he supposed his image would be for sale.[6]

Othniel had six more years to live, and they were peaceful ones. He rejoiced when brother Robert became a minister. The three sisters, who had never married, died, and he was sad as though he had seen them only the week before, though it was forty years since he had left England. Letters went regularly to Robert and to Robert's son and daughter, now married. They were quiet letters, those of an elderly man withdrawing more and more into his family, watching the children grow up, learn a business, marry, and start a new generation.

Life was orderly now, peaceful, and at last secure.

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[6] The death mask is now in the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, together with a cast of the bust that was based on it.

JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY AND THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF NORWICH

By DAVID E. SWIFT*

In the time of Queen Elizabeth I, Norwich vied with Bristol for the honor of being the next largest city in England after London. Through the next two centuries it remained one of the leading textile centers of the country. Any account of economic developments in Norwich and the county of Norfolk during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries must give a prominent place to the Gurneys, a family of remarkably successful weavers, wool dealers, and bankers. British Quakerism during the same period was profoundly affected by the business achievements of this family and others, such as the Peases, the Lloyds and the Barclays.[1] The interrelation between these Friends' religious and business callings was a complex one. As Tawney and Weber observed of Protestantism in general,[2] the disciplines encouraged by the Society of Friends promoted both industrious and responsible activity in business. Yet the cares of expanding enterprises and the way of life of non-Quaker business associates often seemed to be at odds with inward stillness and outward simplicity.

By 1838 Joseph John Gurney, aged fifty years, had become a well-to-do banker and a respected Friends minister. Accordingly, he might well have taken special notice when Frederick Denison Maurice, leader of the Broad Church Movement in the Church of England, published in *The Kingdom of Christ* an incisive critique of contemporary Quakerism. Indeed, Maurice's criticism might

* David E. Swift, Professor of Religion at Wesleyan University, has a full-length biography of Gurney in preparation.

[1] Cf. Arthur Raistrick, *Quakers in Science and Industry* (London, 1950).

[2] R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York, 1926); Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London, 1930).

well have been directed at Gurney himself. For all the constructive benevolence of Friends, declared Maurice, they had completely failed to bear an effective witness against the most pervasive disease infecting English and American society, the disease of "money-getting." How could Friends cope with this problem when acquisition of wealth was the business of most who entered the Society? With irony Maurice noted:

A society, the members of which are, to all outward appearances—its ministers as well as others—principally occupied in trade, nay, which till lately had a fear of being occupied in any thing else, is to be the witness against a world, which has for its most characteristic, most irreligious distinction, the worship of mammon.[3]

Four years earlier, Friends themselves had officially recognized the dangerous implications of current business success. At London Yearly Meeting in 1834 a report had been made by a committee which had been visiting Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in England the preceding year. This committee declared that desire for wealth and for the luxuries which wealth would buy had become an injurious force in the life of the Society. This desire was influencing Friends toward low standards in both truth and justice and toward "a coveting, engrossing spirit of monopoly." The committee acknowledged that Friends in the larger urban areas were distinguished for their "sobriety, industry, and liberality to the poor." Nevertheless,

there is great occasion for the warning language of the Apostle John to be heard amongst us: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." That single devotedness which so marked our predecessors in the Truth, and which led them to sit aloof to the world, that they might more abound in the work of the Lord, is we fear greatly wanting amongst us. Hence the great deficiency in some places of those who, having themselves submitted to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, are qualified to take the oversight of the flock of Christ.[4]

On the other hand, successful businessmen such as the Gurneys were making many-sided contributions to the economic welfare of their communities, both in good times and in bad. Quite apart

[3] *The Kingdom of Christ; or, Hints respecting the Principles, Constitution, and Ordinances of the Catholic Church* (New York, 1843), pp. 71 f. The first edition of this work appeared in 1838.

[4] London Yearly Meeting, Minutes, 1831-35 (Library, Friends House, London).

from personal financial advantage, the only "responsible" course for such Friends seemed to be to continue in their pivotal roles, yet to strive to avoid the actual worship of the god of wealth. The career of J. J. Gurney and his own ruminations upon it illustrate the reasons why most Quaker businessmen have eschewed the example of John Woolman, the young New Jersey tailor and storekeeper of the previous century who, seeing his enterprises burgeoning, had drastically cut back his business activity to leave himself unencumbered and ready to devote himself to other concerns.

Gurney entered the family bank in 1805, at the age of sixteen. Gurneys Bank had been organized a few years before J. J. Gurney's birth, to formalize the financial operations which had for some time been carried on, along with the Gurney wool business. As Gurney wool dealers of the earlier eighteenth century had been prominent in the development of Norwich as a weaving center, so Gurney bankers of the latter eighteenth century had played a crucial role in Norwich business expansion. And in times of business depression they had been a center of financial stability, had buttressed the solvency of many smaller Norwich enterprises, and had supported relief measures for the unemployed.

J. J. Gurney's banking career fell in a period in which country banks (those outside London) were rapidly extending the scope of their operations and were subject to extreme strain in times of financial crisis. Country banking had come into being as one aspect of the expansion in production during the Industrial Revolution. Between 1750 and 1793 the number of banks outside London had increased from about twelve to over four hundred. By the 1840's, however, the power and activities of localized country banks were on the decline. The Bank Charter Act of 1844, aiming at eliminating some of the causes of extreme booms and slumps, restricted the volume of private note-issues. Moreover, the 1840's were the beginning of the Railway Age. The extensive construction of railroads meant a vast widening of the markets of local producers, and before long the local bank was out of date.[5]

[5] L. S. Pressnell, *Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 1 f.

One other aspect of country banking in Gurney's time warrants notice. Between 1708 and 1826 joint-stock banking (i.e. banking done by firms set up as corporations) was the legal monopoly of the Bank of England. This promoted the development of local proprietary banks, but it also meant that these banks needed intermediaries in getting the funds of depositors into the areas where investment capital was in demand. This mediating function came to be carried by the London discounting houses,[6] which afforded local banks lucrative investment opportunities. Richardson and Overend, in which J. J. Gurney's older brother Samuel became a partner in 1807 (later named Overend, Gurney and Company), was for about forty years the largest discounting house in the world.[7] When there was a local banking crisis in country areas, occasioned by a depression in the textile market or poor harvests, the ties between country banks and both London discounting houses and London banks were of crucial importance, for a flow of specie from London to the country bank could forestall bankruptcy.

In 1809, when Gurney was twenty-one years old, his father died. He became head of the family estate at Earlham and, shortly thereafter, a partner in the bank. For the next ten years he evidently gave himself with single-minded energy to his new responsibilities. He had a sense of rightness in his vocation as a banker. After a two-week holiday in December 1812, he wrote his sister, Elizabeth Fry, of his enjoyment in resuming his regular work: "I . . . seem never so happy as when in my own nook, surrounded by my own objects."[8]

In the spring of 1815 both Elizabeth Fry and Gurney's uncle Joseph pressed young Gurney to leave the Bank for a time in order to accompany his sister in her traveling ministry. Gurney was reluctant. He had not himself shared in vocal ministry nor been recorded as a minister by his meeting. He felt that he had neither the maturity nor the call of the Spirit to warrant his

[6] I.e., those who sold bills of exchange or notes of indebtedness at a reduced rate to would-be investors.

[7] *Dictionary of National Biography,* s. v. Samuel Gurney (1786-1856).

[8] Letter of Dec. 26, 1812, Gurney MSS (Library, Friends House, London), III, 294.

assuming the labors of an itinerant minister among Friends. More than this, he felt himself to be in the right place in his post at the Bank.[9]

Even after Gurney became a recorded minister in 1818, bank responsibilities and family ties prevented, for a time, his responding fully to his calling as a minister. In May 1819 he wrote to his elderly friend, a seasoned Quaker, Jonathan Hutchinson, giving the reasons why it seemed impracticable to go to London for Yearly Meeting. He had been married less than two years. One child had been stillborn. His wife was to bear another child in two months. She was willing to have Gurney go, but, he commented, "as she is but delicate, I cannot leave her with any comfort to either of us." Nor would the demands of the Bank let him go: "I cannot think that my business claims a very inferior share of my attention, for it is extensive, and multifarious and if not attended to sedulously would soon bring me and all my professions into disrepute." To be sure, Gurney's letter also betrayed restlessness.

> And why should I be so circumstanced? Is it right for one who pretends even to *preach* Christianity to occupy such a spot in life? . . . I can only say that such is the situation in which my predecessors placed me—in which I have long continued—in which I now am—and from which as far [as] I now see, I cannot extricate myself.
>
> On the other hand I must acknowledge, that if business were less prevalent with me, I should *probably* have more both of time and mind—to give the Lord and the Lord's people in my day and generation. On the whole I believe it best quietly to wait — and to watch the Divine dispensations towards me. Perhaps the day will come, when circumstances will at least in part relieve me of my burthen.[10]

By the summer of 1821 Gurney's wife had given birth to a son and a daughter, John Henry and Anna. Business at the bank was going well. Gurney felt real pride in effective discharge of business responsibilities. In his Journal he observed: "It is obviously the religious duty of a trustee to so large an amount, to be diligent in watching his trust. It appears to me, on the whole, that

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[9] Letter of March 16, 1815 to Joseph Gurney, Gurney MSS, III, 306.

[10] Letter of May 8, 1819 to Jonathan Hutchinson, Gurney MSS, III, 336.

our concern was never better watched or conducted in its several ramifications."[11]

Harrowing days for bankers followed close after this complacent entry. With the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo and the end of the war with France in 1815, there had been a sharp decline in government expenditure. Postwar trade had been slow to pick up. Business failures and bank failures had been high during late 1815 and 1816. Conditions eased up for a time, but a critical depression developed during the winter of 1821-22. On December 23, 1821, Gurney wrote in his Journal: "My mind was oppressed and overdone yesterday by business: its cares, its turmoil, and the distresses of a temporal nature, which are now so awfully prevalent in these parts."[12] Five months later, business affairs were still burdensome, and Gurney felt exhausted by the situation, so precarious for many individuals and for the country as a whole.

Far more grave than the slumps of 1815 and 1821 were the "panic" of late 1825 and the general depression of the weaving industry in Norwich in the late 1820's and early '30's. The crisis of 1825 wrought so much havoc among country banks and their depositors that legislation was passed in 1826 prohibiting the issue of small notes by local banks and thus presaging the end of the era of private banks.[13]

In November 1825 a run on banks began in the country and in London. Samuel Gurney wrote his younger brother Joseph John on the 15th of the month, summoning him to come at once from Norwich to London. On the 23rd the latter noted in his Journal that his three days in the city had been a trying time, for there was "great distress for want of money, and affairs at

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[11] Journal entry for July 8, 1821, in J. B. Braithwaite, *Memoirs of Joseph John Gurney: with Selections from His Journal and Correspondence* (Philadelphia, 1854), I, 212 ff.

[12] In the privately-printed folio volume, "Extracts from the Letters, Journals, etc. of Joseph John Gurney" (Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library [other copies with slight variations in the Pendle Hill Library, Wallingford, Pa., Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, and Friends House Library, London]; hereafter referred to as "Haverford Extracts"), p. 144.

[13] Pressnell, pp. 144, 507.

their acme of anxiety." He gives us no details, of course, as to Gurney financial operations, only commenting: "I was favoured with much calmness, and even cheerfulness, . . . and was enabled, to a point which could scarcely have been looked for, to assist in arranging everything comfortably."[14]

But the worst was yet to come. Gurney was interrupted in early December, during a journey of ministry to meetings in the South and West of England. Samuel Gurney had again called him to London, but this time he had to stay for nearly five weeks, a time of "deep trial" and "almost overwhelming solicitudes about business, etc."[15] Instead of resuming his journey in the southwest, Gurney returned to Norwich to stay close to the home bank. The following July he was still worried by "the general stagnant and almost calamitous state of business."[16] Gurney described these nightmare weeks in London in a letter to Jonathan Hutchinson:

> An awful stormy time it was. I never saw the like before, and truly I can say that the only sure refuge was the "strong tower" — the name of the Lord. Many were deeply distressed, and I never witnessed anything so like the judgments of God on a people who had made for themselves idols of gold and idols of silver. It has occasioned me more than a little suffering, from the feeling of my own numerous and important ties to the earth; ties it would be wholly out of my power to sever.[17]

That Gurneys Bank survived was evidently due primarily to the wisdom of its investment policy and the strength of the support available from London. These two factors were, of course, related. Seven months before the crash, Joseph John Gurney had written Samuel outlining the assets of the Bank in Norwich. They totaled £3,514,935, and included the following investments[18]:

Richardson, Overend and Gurney — good bills but "not impregnable" — at a very low rate of interest	2,311,000

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[14] "Haverford Extracts," p. 214.

[15] Journal entry for Feb. 20, 1826, "Haverford Extracts," pp. 216 f.

[16] Journal entry for July 5, 1826, "Haverford Extracts," p. 222.

[17] Letter of Jan. 21, 1826, in Braithwaite, *Memoirs,* I, 312 f.

[18] W. H. Bidwell, *Annals of an East Anglian Bank* (Norwich, 1900), pp. 177 f.

Barclay and Co — mostly Richardson and Overend small bills	322,000
Investments in London (Richardson, Overend and Gurney stocks, others and some mortgages)	431,335
"Good country securities"	100,000
Sound but unsecured debits (agriculture, gentry, trade)	204,600

The importance of the relationship with Samuel Gurney's discounting house can hardly be overemphasized. During this panic one London agent for over forty country banks, the Bank of Sir Peter Pole and Company, suspended all payments to the country to protect itself. But in Norwich the Gurneys were able to "stay the plague" by putting a pile of £1 notes on the counter. As Gurney put it later, "For our own parts we found it necessary to drench Norfolk with half a million in Bank Notes."[19] By going further than usual in extending credit locally they were able to save many men from ruin. How much they affected the local situation is indicated by the fact that, when the government persuaded the Bank of England in early 1826 to make advances to banks in the larger cities to prevent a recurrence of the panic, £115,490 was advanced in Manchester, £30,300 in Huddersfield (a comparatively small city), and only £2,400 in Norwich, a city of over 60,000 inhabitants.[20]

These years of recurring financial crises, 1815-30, were also a time of special disaster for the weaving industry in Norwich. The Gurney family, which had done so much to build up this industry, was energetic in efforts to mitigate the suffering attendant upon its decline. During the first half of the nineteenth century Norwich weavers were slowly losing out to industrial centers in northern England in the competition for the cloth market. Norwich had reached its peak as a textile center in the 1770's. The city had then numbered about 36,000 and had had 12,000 looms making cloth worth £1,200,000 a year. It had become famous for its bombazine, in large demand in Spain for

[19] MS autobiography, written on the ship coming to America in 1837 (Library, Friends House, London).

[20] Bidwell, p. 182.

mantillas, and for its camlets,[21] bought by Spanish religious orders and by the Chinese through the East India Company. Norwich camlets were celebrated for their texture and their resistance to weather.

The weaving trade had been hurt both by the American Revolution and by the continuous state of war between England and France in the late 1700's and early 1800's. These wars had disrupted shipping to foreign parts and destroyed the buying power of some of England's former customers. Moreover, what market there was for textiles had gradually been secured by mills in Yorkshire and Lancashire. The final blow to textile manufacture was to come in 1832, when the East India Company ceased to export camlet cloth to China.

By the end of the eighteenth century Norwich was comparatively well-equipped to take care of temporary or chronic poverty among its inhabitants. R. H. Mottram, a Norwich historian, estimated that nearly £30,000 was spent annually by the city for relief of the needy. This was aside from private charity.

In spite of these provisions and an established tradition of relief by public subscription in times of special crisis, the suffering attendant upon unemployment had grown worse from 1815 on. Norwich, along with the rest of England, experienced turbulent unrest and some violence. The columns of *The Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette* in 1815 told of meetings of landowners petitioning Parliament to pass Corn Laws to protect the price of locally-grown grain. But there was also a meeting to petition Parliament against such Corn Laws, for increase in the price of grain would force wages up, increase the price of wool and of cloth and further disadvantage it on the market. In March 1815 a local riot developed as a crowd gathered to express its hostility against the Member of Parliament from Norwich who was president of the Norfolk Agricultural Society.

Four years later, the citizens of Norwich noisily protested the lethargy of the British government in investigating the tragedy of St. Peter's Fields in Manchester—the so-called "Peterloo Mas-

[21] A cloth made of various combinations of wool, silk, and hair, as a substitute for the original camlet, a costly Eastern fabric.

sacre," in which eleven persons had been killed and several hundreds wounded when local magistrates ordered a cavalry charge to break up a meeting addressed by radical reformers. The subsequent protest meeting in Norwich was characteristic of the popular feeling which ran high all over England. Indeed some said the "Peterloo Massacre" had brought England to the brink of revolution. Unrest in Norwich reached a peak during the extended depression in 1830 and thereafter. Thousands of unemployed weavers were ripe for Chartist agitation and invitations to violence. Men who wanted to work at the reduced wages which millowners were prepared to pay were kept out of factories by their fellow workers. Looms were thrown into the river and the lives of local factory owners were in danger.

Gurney's role in these troubled times was threefold. He was active in a variety of schemes to allay local suffering. He appeared in public meetings at times of fevered excitement to counsel reasonableness. And he eventually went directly to persons in Parliament to plead for remedial measures.

In 1814 Gurney had helped to organize a large-scale program of distribution of food to the needy.[22] After the panic of November and December 1825, he energetically sought to arouse the public of Norwich to cope with "the *dreadful* distress which prevails in the great mass of our once *laboring*—now alas! *idle* — population." After five days of labor he could report that bread had been delivered to thousands of families, and £3300 had been raised.[23] As in 1814, soup tickets were distributed to needy families, each good for a quart of soup and a sixpenny loaf. Boilers which had been set up to heat soup in the earlier crisis were put to use again. At the end of a month, £4600 had been subscribed. Six persons had given as much as £100 apiece. These included the High Sheriff and three members of the Gurney family.[24] The unemployed were orderly during this emergency. Indeed the "Weavers Committee for Unemployed Workmen of Norwich" sent a letter to the *Norwich Mercury* expressing gratitude "for

[22] Journal entry for Jan. 29, 1814, in "Haverford Extracts," p. 57.

[23] Letter of Jan. 21, 1826 to Jonathan Hutchinson, Gurney MSS, III, 425.

[24] J. J. Gurney, his uncle Joseph Gurney, and his cousin Richard Hanbury Gurney.

the benevolent and truly Christian exertions of the affluent in ministering to our necessities during the present unprecedented depression of trade." The Committee went on to express the hope that, by peaceable behavior, they might "continue to deserve this great interest on their behalf."[25]

The most explosive situation in Norwich in which Gurney was involved was the strife between cloth manufacturers and organized weavers in the depth of the depression of December 1829 and January 1830. Conditions in Norwich had continued difficult after the crash of the winter of 1825-26. Late in 1829, the bottom again dropped out of the market for Norwich woven goods. Several thousand weavers chose a committee to represent them. This committee tried to prevent local manufacturers from reducing wages. But millowners saw no other way of lowering the cost of production to the point where they might hope to regain business from the northern mills, which had progressed faster in mechanization and also had access to cheap labor.

Gurney met with the Mayor, several aldermen, and other citizens to see whether an appeal should be made to the Norwich public to give to a relief fund for unemployed weavers. Gurney opposed such a public subscription as long as the weavers were intimidating their fellows to prevent them from taking what weaving was available at decreased wage rates. The others agreed. Gurney was chosen to carry the decision of this group to a gathering of two thousand unemployed weavers waiting in a large public hall.[26]

Considering the unpalatable nature of the report he had to deliver, Gurney evidently handled the situation effectively. He expressed the deep sympathy of Norwich citizens for their unemployed fellows and the great desire to put on a drive for relief funds. Such a move was, however, being prevented by the current use of violence against would-be workers. Gurney defended the right of any weaver to refuse work at a given rate, but denied his right to obstruct another man's taking work. The *Norwich Mercury* reported that Gurney was received with much

[25] *Norwich Mercury,* Jan. 21, 1826; Feb. 18, 1826; and Jan. 28, 1826.
[26] *Norwich Mercury,* Jan. 2, 1830.

kindness.[27] By others the meeting was described as tumultuous. At the close of the meeting, Gurney invited the weavers' committee to join him the next morning for breakfast at Earlham Hall, the Gurney residence. Sixty or seventy came, including one prominent local Chartist. There was long and friendly discussion over an ample meal. The weavers explained that even at the usual rate they could earn only about ten shillings a week, barely enough to keep their families off relief. Gurney defended the position of the manufacturers in reducing wages as necessary "because . . . where the work could be done at the cheapest rate, there it would ultimately *go;* and because . . . no smaller reduction would put them upon *fair terms of* competition with the country weavers."

Gurney assumed that, for the duration of the crisis, the difference between the wages earned and minimum subsistence would have to be paid out of the poor rate. The weavers, however, objected to working long hours and still being on relief.[28]

The manufacturers held their ground on reduced wages and the weavers held theirs, refusing to work for several weeks. Tension rose. During the second week in January 1830, one manufacturer, recognized in the street, was chased by a mob. He retreated into a house near the Cathedral. Missiles were thrown. The riot act was read. The mayor urged the crowd to disperse, and two were arrested. Sixty looms were set up in the Workhouse, where those who wanted might work under protection. Three to four thousand weavers gathered in the streets outside the Workhouse and had to be dispersed by horsemen. Vitriol was dashed into the face of another prominent manufacturer as he turned from the street to enter his home. Gradually, however, the majority of weavers shifted their ground and expressed willingness to work at lower wages.

During the worst conditions, in mid-January, the Gurneys spent a great deal of money both for the purchase of soup, bread, and fuel and "in promoting the putting-out of work,"[29] i. e., in

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Letter from J. J. Gurney to Joseph Gurney, Jan. 26, 1830, Gurney MSS, III, 520.

subsidizing the process of providing yarn to be woven into cloth. At a public meeting on January 21, Gurney pressed for another general subscription. Over £2000 was raised by mid-March.[30] The help was none too much and none too soon. It had been an unusually cold winter. One minister, who had visited all the families in his parish, told of many entire families lying in the same bed through the day to keep warm. Toward the end of 1830 Gurney gave £500 toward establishing a District Visiting Society to guarantee wise handling of requests for aid.

Economic conditions in Norfolk remained difficult throughout Gurney's life. In the spring of 1834, he had an extended conference in London with the elderly Whig, Lord Grey, Prime Minister for the past several years, and with Lord Althorpe and Edward Stanley, both men of prominence in Parliament. Gurney outlined the demoralized state of agricultural labor in Norfolk and the inadequacy of the Norwich Poor Law. He was worried over the increase of crime in the city and saw the Poor Law, paying relief automatically out of a tax-supported fund, as a major contributing cause.[31]

In the fall of 1845, two years before his death, Gurney wrote a long letter to Robert Peel, First Lord of the Treasury. He wrote on behalf of the poor in the County of Norfolk, telling Peel that the wheat harvest in Norfolk had been far below average and the potato crop had been a failure on account of disease. Even during the recent years of general prosperity in England the factory laborers of Norwich had been only partially employed and at miserable wages. They had got through the previous winter with great difficulty, and extreme poverty had greatly increased the

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[30] *Norfolk Chronicle,* Jan. 23, 1830, and subsequent issues.

[31] Gurney pressed upon Grey, Althorpe, and Stanley the virtues of the system used by the Evangelical preacher Thomas Chalmers to eliminate pauperism in Glasgow. With the consent of his parishioners, Chalmers had ended the legally-established system of poor rates and relief, and substituted a voluntary agency operating on three basic principles: greater thrift on the part of the poor because of no automatic relief payments, more mutual assistance within families in times of crisis, and voluntary liberality on the part of the wealthy, now relieved of compulsory taxation. (J. J. Gurney, *Chalmeriana* [1853], pp. 10 ff.).

fatalities from smallpox.[32] After some rise in employment during the summer, Gurney reported that manufacturers were dropping employees from the payroll again, and winter was coming on. "It is impossible to conceive what will become of the poor," he added, "even at the present high price of bread, and should that price continue to rise, which we have too much reason to expect, the consequences to the population of our city cannot fail to be of the most deplorable and alarming character."

Gurney, speaking for his fellow citizens, respectfully urged Peel to effect a temporary suspension of all import duties on essential foods and especially on grain used for making bread. He urged this action as an emergency measure quite apart from the general question of the Corn Laws and party positions on that matter.[33]

During these recurrences of unemployment and the general decline in the Norwich weaving industry, Gurney continued as a partner in Gurneys Bank. The Bank, profiting from the general steady expansion in industrial production and commercial activity, evidently provided its owners with substantial profits over the years. Gurney continued to be uneasy over his role, yet he remained with the Bank until his death in 1847. To be sure, during his three years of travel in America, he had given up a third of his share of Bank income, turning this amount over to the partners who remained at their posts in Norwich. Yet the annual volume of business and the profits steadily increased. In May 1839 Gurney wrote his brother Samuel from Poughkeepsie, New York. His letter was perhaps the best answer that could be given to Maurice's criticism of Friends for having become so extensively involved in business enterprise:

> One cannot but feel alarmed at the flow of money—attended by a corresponding extent of pecuniary engagement—to which thy letter alludes. But it really does not seem in any way to be of our own seeking and it appears to me that the grand object to aim at under the circumstances, is

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[32] Gurney had been active in promoting general vaccination against smallpox in 1819. But suspicion of it was great and many had not taken advantage of the opportunity.

[33] Letter of Oct. 29, 1845, in Peel Papers, CCCXCVII (British Museum, Department of MSS).

Divine grace to enable us to be good, faithful and *liberal* stewards, of that which is thus committed to our charge. I think my own greatest fear is, *lest our willingness to part freely with our money,* should diminish rather than increase, with the increase of wealth. I am sure that this is the natural tendency of the thing with the corrupt heart of man—and it is a tendency which on our part requires a most watchful and resolute counteraction. Otherwise we shall grow poor, in the *worst* of all senses.[34]

[34] MS letter at end of MS Autobiography.

Notes and Documents

WHITTIER AND THE UNITARIANS

By EDWARD D. SNYDER*

Seldom, if ever, was the poet Whittier put in a more exasperating position than when, in the autumn of 1882, it was reported to him that the Editor of *Friends' Review* had cast a slur on his soundness in religious matters by comparing him unfavorably with Longfellow. The situation thus created was delicate. The two poets had been such close friends that at the *Atlantic Monthly* dinner in honor of Whittier's seventieth birthday, he had called on Longfellow, out of the sixty guests present, to read a poem which Whittier had written for the occasion.

The Editor of *Friends'Review* was Dr. Henry Hartshorne, an influential Philadelphia Quaker, who was connected with many hospitals, who had taught briefly at Haverford College, and was a leader in good works both in this country and, later, in Japan.

The resulting controversy, in which Whittier showed a rare combination of firmness and Christian charity, was not mentioned by Pickard or any other biographer for the simple reason that the facts were not known until the present time. They have just come to light in four letters recently given to Haverford College by Francis R. Cope and Harold Evans.

Whittier's first letter, voicing his protest, here follows in full.

Amesbury Mass
8 Mo 29 1882

(Personal and Private)
Dear Friend:

I enclose $2.10 for the Review for the next year.

I do not often take notice of comments in private or public, per-

*Edward D. Snyder, Professor Emeritus of English at Haverford College and a former Trustee of the First Unitarian Church in Philadelphia, has contributed a number of articles, notes, and reviews on Whittier to the BULLETIN.

sonal to myself, but I confess I was a little surprised & pained to hear that the Editor of the Review, in justifying himself for publishing a favorable notice of my dear and lamented friend, Longfellow, declared that the latter was "sound" in religious matters, and that he wished Whittier was equally so! I know of nothing in my writings or my life, which could induce the Editor of the Review to wish I was as "sound" as a very decided Unitarian, and non-meeting attendant.

No one can have a more humbling sense of his own weakness and short-coming [*sic*] than myself, but I have prayerfully and earnestly sought to know & do the will of my Heavenly Father, and have been mercifully favored with a tender love of all His creatures and the broad charity which enables me to see the good rather than the evil in them. I have no trust in any word or work of mine. My sole hope and reliance are in the mercy and goodness of God, as revealed in Christ in his earthly manifestation and in his spiritual evidence in the souls of men. The great, vital doctrine of our early Friends is very dear to me; but while I cannot feel myself in accord with some of the new methods and leadings in our Society, I have none but kindly feelings for those who differ from me. I freely accord to them the right which I claim for myself, to be true to their own convictions. Evil surmisings and insinuations, impeachment of motive, and unfounded charges of heresy, are inconsistent with Christian charity and I hope we shall endeavor to avoid them. And in this connection I may say that I feel much unity with the leading editorial [of] the Review of last week, and I hope the spirit of that article will be manifested in the future conduct of the paper.

I am very truly
thy friend
JOHN G. WHITTIER

Dr. Hartshorne's reply is so long that unimportant parts are here summarized or omitted.

Germantown, Phila.
9. 1. 82.

John G. Whittier
Dear Friend

I am *grieved* that any word of mine, however misapprehended, should have given thee pain, and placed one known only to thee as connected with a Friends' paper, in a position of seeming uncharitableness.

[This first paragraph continues by expressing at length Dr. Hartshorne's admiration for Whittier. Paragraph two raises the question as to who was Whittier's informant and whether Dr. Hartshorne was quoted accurately. The letter continues:]

I did not know that, as said by thee, Longfellow was a "decided

Unitarian." I think I *cannot* have expressed a wish that "Whittier was *equally* sound" with him. What I *may* have said was (pardon the repetition) that I *wished I was sure* of the soundness of John G. Whittier's holding in doctrine.

Thy letter just received has gratified that wish. But I feel that I must endeavor to give excuse for its possibility; and to do this, must be allowed great frankness, I hope in a spirit of Christian love.

A leading, universally read author is, unavoidably, whatever his personal reserve, in some sense a public character. Everyone does not, perhaps, read appreciatively all his writings; but *impressions* are formed from salient indications. While, then, such earlier pieces as "The Crucifixion" "Palestine" and others gave clear evidence of recognition of what is called evangelical truth, besides abounding testimony to the visitation to man of the Spirit of God, — and the poem "Trinitas" is exquisite beyond all the School theologians, — there were some signs which caused uneasiness about the later *broadening* of our Poet's mind. Was it not somewhat remarkable for a member of *any* orthodox church (and is not George Fox's Quakerism orthodox?) to write and print a Hymn for the Opening of a Unitarian House of Worship?[1] Is there *nothing* which ought to be insisted upon before the world, of difference between orthodoxy and unitarianism? *Is "love" all?* In Philadelphia, the Hicksite defection makes us tremble before such sweeping broadening. Again — in "The Vision of Echard and Other Poems" (how we have enjoyed them!), one small volume contains thrice expressed contempt for *creeds*. We do not need creeds, as Friends, and object especially to the Genevan creed. But, dare we *despise* what so many *revere?* Particularly, when I read one line, the thought came "I *wish* Whittier had not written *that;* he does not mean all that it seems to say." This was in the third verse on p. 123 of the "Vision of Echard," — in "At School-Close."

"And, spite of *all the lies of creeds,* Hold fast the truth that God

[1] The poem to which Dr. Hartshorne objected is in the Cambridge Edition of Whittier, p. 227. T. Starr King (1824-1864), for whose church it was written, was a Unitarian minister and lecturer whose popularity rivaled that of Henry Ward Beecher. In 1860 he resigned from his Boston church, sacrificing comfort and security, to take over a struggling Unitarian parish in San Francisco. Again people flocked to hear him. Within four years he paid off the $20,000 church debt and built an edifice costing $90,000, toward which he gave $5,000 from his lectures. His constant patriotic activity was so intense and so successful that on his death the U. S. Mint in San Francisco and many business houses closed in mourning; the State Legislature adjourned for three days, then hung his portrait in the State House, and pronounced him "the man whose incomparable oratory saved California to the Union." Starr King Theological Seminary was named in his honor.

is good." I fear that many readers may take it that the author believes that all creeds are false as well as imperfect; and to deny *all* that is common to the creeds, where would that land us? . . . For the satisfaction of some others, I wish that I might extract *a few sentences* concerning thy belief from the middle part of thy letter, and insert in the Friends' Review, as from a private letter from thee. If agreeable to thee, please oblige by letting me know it at thy convenience.

With great regard
Respect, thy friend,
H. HARTSHORNE

As we study the letters, we note the cleavage between Whittier's tolerance and Dr. Hartshorne's anti-Unitarian bias, as implied here and as openly expressed in his next letter. This cleavage was both personal and geographical. The power of Unitarianism was vastly stronger in Massachusetts than in Pennsylvania. There, Unitarianism, backed by the influence of Harvard and such literary giants as Emerson, Holmes, Hawthorne, Alcott, and Lowell, was dominant, its value taken for granted. Not so in Dr. Hartshorne's Pennsylvania!

We observe, also, that the controversy of these four letters is on a very high intellectual level. Dr. Hartshorne's attack is logical, vigorous, and carefully documented; Whittier's defense and counter-attack are masterful and speak for themselves.

In his first letter such mild pro-Unitarian feelings as Whittier had, appear — perhaps by accident — in his spelling the word *his* with a capital when it refers to the Heavenly Father and a small letter when it refers to Christ. In his second letter he politely refuses to be quoted in refutation of himself, and firmly stands by his objection to "the lies of creeds." Nor will he be argued out of his support of the Unitarian Thomas Starr King, whom he defends in no uncertain terms. The two following letters are printed in full.

Amesbury
9 Mo 5 1882

Dear friend,

Thy kind letter has just reached me. I accept thy explanation of the remark referred to. I mentioned it, with no unkind feeling about it, but I was sorry that it was made by one of whom I had formed so high an estimate, and thought the mention of it might be of real service to thee.

I think I should prefer to have my letter personal and private.

I have come to the conclusion that it is not worth while to offer any further defense of myself or my opinions, from the fact that all I can conscientiously have to say and all that is said in my note to thee has been repeatedly in print, and has not saved me from continued misrepresentation and false insinuations. I am weary of questionings and criticisms on the part of slander-mongering Christians. The e[c]clesiastical and other history has compelled me to regard heresy-hunting as the one great scandal of Christendom. What dreadful wars, persecutions and unspeakable cruelties, malice, hatred, evil-speaking and all unrighteousness have grown out of it! All along the sad, miserable ages, it burned the best men and women at the stake.

Of course I object to *creeds* which virtually compel people to *profess* to believe them, when they really do not. In speaking of religious matters I have ventured only to speak of my own experience and conscientious belief. I dared not take as my own the thoughts and words of others, nor try to pronounce their *shibboleth,* for fear of being cut off at the fords of Jordan. I must be true to myself, and to the measure of light afforded me. Never lightly or carelessly or irreverently have I spoken.

I meant what I said — in the lines to which thee seem to object.

"In spite of all the lies of creed[s]
Hold fast the truth that God is good!"

Some of the worst forms of blasphemy are embodied in creeds which good men try to persuade themselves that they believe. In "The Vision of Echard," I endeavored to give the faith and feeling of the old mystics of the Catholic Church with whom I confess to much sympathy, though not entire unity. In "The Over-heart," in "Our Master" and various other poems, I have sought to express clearly as possible my faith & hope. I can do [no] more.

Thanking thee for the kind tone of thy letter, and with the wish that thee and I may both be faithful to the light mercifully given us, I am

thy sincere friend
JOHN G. WHITTIER

I notice what thee say of Thos. Starr King. I knew him perhaps better than thee could. His head might be wrong but his heart was right, and he did the Lord's work at the cost of his life in saving the Pacific slope from secession and civil war. I think thee must own that my verses were not "unsound."

Germantown, Phila.
9. 8. 82

John G. Whittier
Dear friend,

Please pardon my encroaching on thy kind attention farther, to remark on some subjects of thy letters. I must plead not guilty of heresy-

hunting or creed-bigotry. I have had dear friends who were and are decided *Unitarians,* — whose essentially Christian character I do not doubt. Yet *Unitarianism,* — as a system appears to me to do much harm in the world, so that I cannot but regret any *apparent* countenance given to it by a Friend.

My remark on the "creed" lines was made in view of the probable interpretation of them in the mind of the average reader. I have to-day re-read the only two creeds used in the liturgy of the American Episcopal Church. I think George Fox or William Penn could have assented to every sentence in both of them, taking the words in their true, simple and Scriptural meaning. There are no lies in them. The only approach to a creed which, so far as I can learn, asserts abhorrent falsehoods is the Westminster Confession. The Church of England 39 articles are objectionable, but very few of the laity of that Church know anything about them. I cannot think, therefore, that all creeds are lies — and must regret, dear friend, still, that one expression. As to the personal question, no one, I think, could read thy beautiful poem "At Last," without being sure that it came from a heart full of Christian feeling, and "the peace of God that passeth all understanding." Again lamenting that any word of mine should have seemed to do thee injustice, I remain

With great respect & regard
thy friend
H. HARTSHORNE

P.S. Might not a fitting subject for thy pen be the coming Bicentennial commemoration of the Landing of William Penn, 10 mo. 1682? A poem from thee on that theme would gratify many Pennsylvanians.

Were Whittier alive today, he would doubtless rejoice that the breach between Orthodox and Hicksite Friends has now been largely healed, that the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia has welcomed distinguished Orthodox Friends to its pulpit, and that the exchange of such courtesy between Philadelphia Quakers and Unitarians is now taken for granted. The poet would find satisfaction, I believe, in knowing that he himself had done much to promote such interdenominational goodwill. He would also approve, I sincerely hope, the publication of correspondence which he once marked "Personal and Private."

Quaker Research in Progress

Information concerning Quaker studies in progress or recently completed but not published should be sent to Henry J. Cadbury, Chairman of the Committee on Historical Research, 774 Millbrook Lane, Haverford, Pennsylvania.

Gracie L. Alexander, 837 Valley Street, Danville, Kentucky. Achieving the Objectives of the Religious Society of Friends through the Provision of Social Services. (A study of Friends Neighborhood Guild, Philadelphia.) Atlanta University School of Social Work: thesis for Master of Social Work degree. 1960. Completed.

Charles Boewe, 5 Balwyn Place, Bala-Cynwyd, Pennsylvania. The English Settlement in Southern Illinois founded by Morris Birkbeck and George Flower. (Contemporary accounts with a running commentary.)

Alice Dupuis, 3 bis Square Antoine Arnauld, Paris 16, France. *Le Visage Européen de William Penn.* Institut d'Études et de Recherches Diplomatiques, Paris. 1958.

C. Hilary Ferrand, 237 Ottey Road, Leeds 16, Yorkshire, England. A Select Bibliography of the Quaker Writings, 1911-1959, of Henry J. Cadbury. (228 items listed with introduction and index.) University of London: thesis for Diploma in Librarianship. 1960.

George F. Frick, Department of History, University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware. Life of Peter Collinson. (An attempt to assess the importance of Collinson as a promoter of natural history.)

Marian S. Hahn, 163 Markham Drive, Pittsburgh 28, Pennsylvania. Elements of Quakerism in the Plays of Christopher Fry. University of Pittsburgh: English, thesis for M.A. Degree. 1960.

John J. McAleer, Department of English, Boston College, Chestnut Hill 67, Massachusetts. The Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier. (A definitive edition.)

J. T. Maltsberger, M.D., 74 Fenwood Road, Boston, Massachusetts. Caspar Wistar, M.D.

E. Ronald Morris, The Hall, Llanfyllin, Montgomeryshire, Wales. Quakerism in Arwystli (West Montgomeryshire).

Sam S. Smith, 10 Valentine Street, Monmouth Beach, New Jersey. Colonel Lewis Morris, ca. 1601-1691. (Biography of a Quaker of Barbados, New York, and New Jersey.)

James M. Whitten, Gorham State Teachers' College, Gorham, Maine. The Political and Social Views of Rufus M. Jones. University of Maine: History, thesis for M.A. degree. 1955. Completed.

Historical News

Friends Historical Association

The Spring Meeting of Friends Historical Association, held at the new Kennett Meetinghouse, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, on Fifth Month 21, 1960, was one of the most successful in years, if one may judge by the numbers—more than four hundred—who attended. 1960 being the 250th anniversary of the building of Old Kennett Meetinghouse (which many Friends visited *en route*), the program was appropriately focused on the history of Kennett. After a welcome by H. Timothy Rayne, Clerk of Kennett Monthly Meeting, James R. Frorer sketched the history of Newark Meeting, "forerunner of Kennett," Dr. Arthur E. James presented some interesting and amusing "Sidelights of Early Kennett Meeting," and George N. Highley painted a dramatic verbal portrait of Bayard Taylor, Kennett's most famous son. Picnic supper was enjoyed by some in the handsome new meetinghouse, by others on the spacious and attractive grounds. Neither the threat nor the actuality of a heavy downpour in the evening dampened the attenders' enthusiasm: they proceeded to Longwood Gardens, where, besides the beautiful and exotic flowers in the great conservatory, they saw a special exhibit of papers and possessions of the Quaker Peirce family, who owned the property for more than two centuries, and listened to illustrated talks on the history of "Peirce's Park" and the world-famous Longwood Gardens. The evening ended with the playing, despite the rain, of the spectacular Longwood fountains.

* * *

Albert Cook Myers, an Honorary Member of Friends Historical Association, died on Fourth Month 1, 1960. The author or editor of many books on Pennsylvania Quaker history and the editor of a projected large-scale edition of William Penn's papers, he was a member of this Association's Board of Directors from 1921 to 1925 and again from 1927 to 1936. As Secretary of the State Historical Commission, he was responsible for erecting scores of historical markers in Pennsylvania.

Book Reviews

Quaker Ways in Foreign Policy. By Robert O. Byrd. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1960. xxi, 230 pages. $5.00.

Robert O. Byrd, a Friend, now the Chairman of the Department of Political Science at North Park College in Chicago, has in this little book undertaken a very formidable assignment. He attempts not only to set forth those elements of Quaker belief which shape the Society's approaches in international affairs, but also to chart the general developments in the approach of Friends in these matters throughout the 300 years of Quaker history. His success in both of these undertakings is sufficient to make his study well worth reading.

The book is perhaps most useful as a general interpretation and as an historical study. There is much in the presentation which is relevant to the "awesome dilemmas" we face in the nuclear age. While the author does not bring us down into the center of that problem, the analysis should be of help to all of us in assessing the strength of our religious tradition. It provides a useful perspective on Quaker efforts (some successful — many unsuccessful) to influence the course of history.

Dr. Hans Morgenthau of the University of Chicago in his introduction clearly sets forth the problem. He suggests, perhaps over-generously, that "In their convictions, achievements, and sufferings, the Quakers bear witness to the teachings of Christianity." He goes on to say that "in their failures they bear witness to the insuperable stubbornness of the human condition." He points out that if the "unbridgable gap between the demands of Christian ethics and human nature did not exist . . . the grace of God would have no object for its work and would have no organic place in the theological system." There are many times, in the midst of both successes and failures, when we could wish that spiritual grace had a larger place in Quaker thought!

Dr. Byrd's book is presented in three parts. In the first he sets forth the essentials of Quaker belief which he feels have special bearing upon the development of our concerns in the field of international affairs. Perhaps here the author also is over-generous in equating the ideal with the actual. In the second part he takes up several of the Quaker convictions which appear to shape the approaches to governments. He points out the problems posed to Friends by the ultimate need for some form of coercive force under the control of international organization. He rightly suggests that this problem would be more manageable under a system of world law.

He reminds us that "George Fox would not disarm William Penn until Penn could live in confidence without his sword at his side."

In the last section Dr. Byrd traces the history of principal Quaker international initiatives over the past 300 years. He points especially to the sustained effort which Friends have made since the close of World War II to bring their deepest convictions to bear in a setting in which we are facing a major breakdown in national and international security systems. While there may in this section not be a great deal that has not been presented in article or book form, and in this manner is known to Quaker historians, there is much that will be of fresh interest to the average reader. It would be useful sometime for this general review to be brought down to date, covering the co-operative development of Quaker work, between British and American Friends and the Friends World Committee, at UN headquarters in New York, with UNESCO in Paris, and at UN's European headquarters in Geneva.

Friends organizations are not always at their best when they attempt to formulate specific remedies for national and international ills. The book suggests, however, that there is a moral power which Friends seek, and which they sometimes achieve, and there is frequently a deep personal concern relevant to the problems of the day which, taken together and in humility, can justifiably give us courage — even though we know that most of our efforts are unlikely to meet with immediate success.

Quaker Program at the United Nations ELMORE JACKSON
New York

Quakers and the Atlantic Culture. By Frederick B. Tolles. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1960. xvi, 160 pages. $3.95.

It is a happy scholar who can offer a collection of his occasional lectures and papers in a volume which makes sense as a whole. *Quakers and the Atlantic Culture* is such a unified work with only a few too many repetitions of leading ideas to mar its continuity as a single book.

But those few ideas are important enough to stand repetition, especially as at least several of them differ substantially from generally accepted views of Quaker history. They are: that the Society of Friends is a branch of the English Puritan movement rather than of continental mysticism; that Quakerism is evangelical rather than quietist in origin, although it tended toward the latter position after 1700; that English and American Friends have, since the seventeenth century, provided cement for an Atlantic Community; that it was the tension between simplicity and worldliness (politics, business, art) rather than either element alone which made for the effectiveness of the Pennsylvania colony; and that the "Holy Experiment" by its "failure" provided a pattern for the typically heterogeneous, democratic, middle-class culture of the modern United States.

Beginning with studies of the origins of the movement in seventeenth-century England, Frederick Tolles follows the immigration to America, analyzes the parts played by Penn, Logan, and the hoard of anonymous seekers who settled Pennsylvania, and studies particularly the effects in

East-West influence of the traveling Quaker ministers. The irony of the ultimate rejection by the Philadelphia Quakers of the Evangelical Whitefield, who was so nearly a brother to George Fox, is only one of many insights into historical paradox that this story provides. Apparently it was the inherent kinship of the early Quakers with the Massachusetts Puritans, as well as with the Methodists, rather than any basic differences, that made for the conflicts and hostilities of colonial religious life.

Finally, Frederick Tolles considers the enduring contribution of the vision of perfection which the Quakers have provided by their history, and he impartially analyzes the tensions between that vision and the practical workings-out of its necessary compromises, especially in his chapters on "Quakerism and Politics," "Quakerism, Capitalism, and Science," and "The Quaker Esthetic." Here he shows how a firm conviction of the ideal can often control and limit without prohibiting necessary action that is fundamentally inconsistent with its principles.

His conclusions could only come perhaps from a convinced rather than a birthright Quaker: that both kinds of people are needed, the absolutists to furnish the ideal as a guide, and the relativists to make it work. The Howard M. Jenkins Professor of Quaker History at Swarthmore College has again demonstrated his suitability for that Chair.

University of Pennsylvania ROBERT E. SPILLER

I Have Called You Friends: The Story of Quakerism in North Carolina. By Francis C. Anscombe. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House. 1959. 407 pages. $5.00.

As one reads this interesting history of North Carolina Quakerism, he catches some of the author's feeling for the Society of Friends and for his own Yearly Meeting. Certainly this work was a labor of love on the part of Dr. Anscombe, who has studied at Woodbrooke, Earlham, and several state universities, and who has been a college professor, a Quaker pastor, and a lawyer.

The author first attempts to sketch the nearly three centuries of Quaker history in North Carolina; then he presents a brief account of the life of the various Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in the state. His presentation of the first is far more satisfactory than his handling of the second—which all too often consists of a listing of "those who have served in the ministry," membership and Bible School statistics, and past clerks. His treatment of the Conservative meetings is skimpy, while those meetings belonging to Ohio Yearly Meeting (Independent) are barely mentioned.

It appears rather clear that the author gathered his material and wrote his account over a period of some years, making no thorough attempt to bring his information up to date before it was published, late in 1959. There are, therefore, a number of shortcomings in the book: the membership statistics are those of 1954; the lists of American Yearly Meetings on pp. 44 and 89 are inaccurate; there is no mention of the new meeting in Charlotte; and the Durham meetinghouse, which was actually built some

years ago, is reported planned and about to be built "in the near future."

In addition to these regrettable mistakes which undoubtedly stem from the time-element involved in gathering the material, there are a number of more serious errors in the book. The Council of Jamnia is mistakenly dated in A.D. 118 rather than in A.D. 90 (p. 36). On p. 357 the death of Joseph Nichols (c. 1773) and the organization of the Nicholites (1774) are placed much too late (1782). John Woolman's 1757 visit to North Carolina is moved to 1759 (p. 161). And, to top it off, slavery appears to continue until 1873 (p. 166), and John Woolman becomes a *British* Friend on p. 217! It might also be noted that "membership" is misspelled eight times in the tables on pages 376-379.

The reviewer is left somewhat puzzled by the author's outlook. In several places he writes longingly and approvingly concerning increased co-operation and new unions between various groups of Friends. Speaking of the division in North Carolina Quakerism, Anscombe says, "The Conservative element is needed to preserve a proper balance" (p. 108); yet elsewhere he describes the Conservative meetings as "typical of Friends of the year 1800" (p. 107). He feels that the adoption of the pastoral system by most of the meetings in North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Five Years) has been justified by the great increase in membership (p. 108), although he realizes that there has been a very marked departure from much of traditional Quakerism (p. 372), that practices and doctrines at variance with original Friends' views have appeared "temporarily" in some meetings (p. 367), and that there are among the pastors "not a few young men who had little Quaker background, and little awareness of the implications of the Quaker faith" (p. 96). The reviewer feels that both Dr. Anscombe and this book would have benefited greatly from his reading John Sykes's *The Quakers: A New Look at Their Place in Society.*

Southern Methodist University KENNETH L. CARROLL

Jonathan Evans and His Time, 1759-1839: Bi-Centennial Biography. By William Bacon Evans. Boston: the Christopher Publishing House. c. 1959. 192 pages. Illustrations. $3.75.

The tempered sympathy of a descendant glows from this review of the Philadelphia Separation of 1827 from the perspective of Jonathan Evans, a weighty Friend near the center of the tragedy. Bacon Evans believes, as I do, that the recent reunion cannot be fruitful if based on the principle of historical amnesia. Therefore he invites Friends everywhere to look calmly at the record, especially on points of difference still current, because differences still arise, and steps should be speedily taken, every time, to settle them.

The central difference is embodied in two consonant Quaker slogans: "Let your lives speak" and "Speak truth to power." The tendency implicit in the first is to emphasize *doing,* and to Elias Hicks this meant reform. The tendency in the second is to emphasize *being,* and to Jonathan Evans (and even more to the Evangelicals) this meant doctrinally sound ministry.

Hicks drew a scrupulous line between free and slave products; his opponents separated with equally harmful scruple the orthodox from the heretic. Thus the belligerents were "united in the strife which divided them."

Bacon Evans makes a good case for doctrine, but whereas he rightly recognizes that Elias Hicks's ideas changed, he does not point out Jonathan Evans's opposite development from views shared with Hicks around 1800. Doctrine is after all nothing but teaching. Do Friends who fear theological doctrine really want to say that the Society has nothing which might educate its neighbors? Bacon Evans wants Friends to reach out and never be "content to be a separated people" (p. 23). The trouble is that creeds, like manna, turn sour after sunset.

Almost as important was the difference over church government. Race Street's penchant was congregational and Jacksonian; Arch Street's presbyterian and Whig. They assumed, respectively, that the popular majority or the experienced minority heard the voice of God. The author does not get above this battle until his conclusion that the whole Society of Friends must be gathered by "the presence and power of the risen Christ" (p. 153).

Although the book does not take advantage of many methods valuable to professional scholars (especially in editing), it benefits considerably by the author's faithful reliance on essential documents. Of the many printed in full, Thomas Evans' account of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1827 (pp. 87-127) is most instructive, although painful, reading.

As a work of art the book bears the testimony of simplicity, but the whole would have had greater integrity if the background had been logically woven in, rather than plunked down in sections. The spare account of the Evanses through the eighteenth century and the anecdotes of ministers and elders are alive with interesting details, and the wit of a man who must have enjoyed the biographer's privilege pops out from many a page. There is no index, but a remarkable set of contemporary illustrations.

University of Vermont T. D. Seymour Bassett

Briefer Notices

By HENRY J. CADBURY

A document of William Penn, dated 1701, undoubtedly his Charter of Property, has been largely recovered, part from the original engrossed manuscript and part from an early draft, and is now edited by Edwin B. Bronner in *Pennsylvania History,* XXIV (1957), 267-292. It was a companion document to his Charter of Privileges, but never actually agreed to by the Assembly or sealed and promulgated. It is, however, an additional valid source of information for Penn's ideals on the subject.

* * *

William Penn as champion of freedom is the subject of the Swedish book by Erik Őberg, *Frihetskämpen: en berattelse från 1600-talet* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelses bokförlag, 1959, 183 pages).

* * *

F. B. Tolles's article "Of the Best Sort but Plain: The Quaker Esthetic," in the *American Quarterly,* XI (1959), 484-502, is a careful analysis of the extent of Quaker simplicity in relation to and reaction against the arts. Their restraint shows most in the severe plainness of their prose writing and of their meetinghouses, less in their clothing—a uniform which was often expensive but not ornate—and perhaps least in the minor arts and crafts. Of course they eschewed music, fiction, and drama entirely. In other fields their concern for aloofness from the world led often to a real appreciation of beauty and the avoidance of meretricious ornamentation. What began on religious and almost ascetic grounds turned out to have the genuine beauty of simplicity. The article seems to invite the reader to further exploration and reflection in the delicate area of Quaker esthetic. (This article is reprinted in Tolles's *Quakers and the Atlantic Culture.*)

* * *

R. D. Owen writes in the *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine,* XXI (1959), 197-215, on "Howard, an Early Philadelphia Family," which for some generations either married Friends—Thomas Howard marrying Grace Beeks in 1723, and his son John marrying Sarah Bunting in 1749—or in many cases joined the Society.

* * *

Helen Corson Livezey contributed a brief "Sketch of Livezey family relative to Plymouth, Whitemarsh, and Lower Merion Townships, from

1770 to 1935," in the *Bulletin* of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, X (October 1955), 12-15.

* * *

From Kansas comes an attractive brochure of local Quaker history, *Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, Argonia Friends Meeting, 1882-1957* (some thirty-five pages mimeographed). Included are lists of officers, committees, and members in 1957.

* * *

North Country Life, XIV (1960), 52-53, has a brief account of "Catherine R. Keese" by Marjorie L. Porter. Catherine Robinson (1806-1860) married Samuel Keese of the family of original settlers at Keeseville, New York.

* * *

Hartzell Spence has been publishing a series of articles in *Look* on "The Story of Religions in America." The thirteenth is on the Quakers, in Volume XXIV, No. 7 (March 29, 1960), pp. 68-74 (illustrated). It emphasizes the diversity in the Society and repeats not very inaccurately some of its dramatic features, events, or personalities.

* * *

An extended and knowledgeable defense of the friendship between "William Penn and James II" by Vincent Buranelli is included in the *Proceedings* of the American Philosophical Society, CIV, No. 1 (1960), 35-53. On James's side this friendship is called by Turner inexplicable. Even Quaker historians have thought Penn naive and mistaken, while until lately hardly anyone has believed in the sincerity of James II. This article analyzes the complicated situation using indubitable testimony. It argues that, in being loyal to James, Penn was neither a fool nor a knave, nor diverted by extenuating circumstance; but basically right about (1) the personality of James, (2) the power-balance between James and the Kingdom, and (3) the probable alternative to James.

* * *

The magazine *Fellowship,* Volume 26, No. 9 (May 1960), prints under the title "Questions to a Conscientious Objector, and Answers, 1679," a transcript from the manuscript book of Sufferings for London and Middlesex Quarterly Meeting of the hearing of Philip Ford before the lieutenancy at Guildhall. The transcript was supplied and edited by Henry J. Cadbury.

* * *

A paper by Mary Sullivan Patterson on "John Barnes — The Man Who Owned Jenkintown" is printed, somewhat condensed but with illustrations, in the *Bulletin* of the Old York Road Historical Society, XXI (1960), 13-29. The subject of the paper came from Sussex to Pennsylvania in 1683 with a minute. He is best known as the benefactor of the meeting and school at Abington, Pennsylvania. This paper collects many other fragments of information about him and his family.

A pamphlet of over sixty pages compiled by Margaret H. Bacon and published in 1959 by the Society it describes (703 N. 8th St., Philadelphia 23) is entitled: "History of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery; the Relief of Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage; and for Improving the Condition of the African Race." Founded in 1775, largely by Friends, as the oldest Abolition Society, it has had a history of great variety of activity. It was largely overshadowed a century ago by other antislavery societies and has in the past century often had a quite minor role. The third of its three objectives appears still to have a large field for usefulness. The pamphlet rests upon the extensive archives of the Society.

* * *

The dedication of the restored old schoolhouse on Brainerd Street, Mt. Holly, supposed to have been the place where John Woolman taught, has produced a number of articles. "New Jersey's 200-Year-Old School," by Gertrude S. Bodine, in *New Jersey Education Association Review,* XXXIII (1959), 110-111, was the basis of an article under "Topics" in the *New York Times* for October 29, 1959. Another article, containing some more recent information, was published in the Trenton Sunday *Times-Advertiser,* October 18, 1959, p. 5. A fuller account, written by Mrs. James L. Ralston, appeared in the *Proceedings* of the New Jersey Historical Society for January, 1954 (LXXII, 26-47).

* * *

"Whittier's Ballads: The Maturing of an Artist," by John B. Pickard in *Essex Institute Historical Collections,* XCVI (1960), 56-72, is an extended article sufficiently described by its title. "On the whole," says the writer, "Whittier's ballads represent his chief poetic achievement. Like Longfellow he was a pioneer in the development of native American ballads."

* * *

An address by Sophie H. Drinker on "Pennsylvania's Honoured Mistress: Unanswered Questions in the Life of Hannah Callowhill Penn" is published in the *Bulletin* of the Old York Road Historical Society, XXI (1960), 3-12. The question given most attention is whether during William Penn's disability, 1712-1718, his wife carried on his affairs with or without a power of attorney.

* * *

Greensboro, North Carolina: The County Seat of Guilford by Ethel Stephens Arnett (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955, 492 pages) deals, as was to be expected, with sundry Quaker individuals and institutions, beginning with a frontispiece picture of a statue of General Nathanael Greene.

* * *

The North Carolinian, V, (1958-59), 535-536, has a discussion by Arthur C. Brown locating the site of Dunn's Creek Quaker Meeting. This meeting was laid down by 1782.

Articles In Quaker Periodicals

By LYMAN W. RILEY

The American Friend

"Quaker Meeting in Dixie" is an account written in 1863 by an Earlham College student, Susan Walker, of Waterford, Virginia. It tells of a meeting for worship held at Fairfax Meeting, Virginia, attended also by Confederate soldiers who were using the meetinghouse as an encampment. —Jan. 25, 1960, p. [32].

Lucy Carner writes of "Jane Addams and the Society of Friends" in honor of the 100th anniversary of the great social worker's birth. There were a few official relationships, including a trip to Germany with American Friends Service Committee personnel in 1919. More significant, however, were "a kinship of spirit and of outlook on life, a shared conviction about war and about 'the things that make for peace'."—Feb. 8, 1960, pp. 37-38.

Selected from a story appearing in the *Gramercy Graphic* of New York City are items of information about the building of the meetinghouse of Twentieth Street Meeting in 1859.—May 16, 1960, p. [160].

Willard Heiss gives a list of available records of some Indiana meetings deposited in the vault of Indiana Yearly Meeting and at the Indiana State Historical Society.—June 13, 1960, p. [192].

The Friend

Leslie Gilbert in "John Bright and the Factory Acts" defends Bright against the charge of callousness and inconsistency arising from the Quaker statesman's opposition to the Factory Acts. He points out that Bright was not defending long working hours but the freedom of employer and employee to determine the length of the working day without state interference. Free trade and absence of state interference (which the Manchester Liberals equated with privilege) would, he believed, bring higher wages and shorter working hours.—Feb. 12, 1960, pp. 197-198.

Friends Journal

Letter from the Past No. 181 is about two "Mementoes of John Woolman." "Now and Then" first describes the old schoolhouse in Mt. Holly in which Woolman probably taught. He then prints, for the first time, a letter of Woolman to Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, a characteristic apology for not keeping "low enough" in his mind in his ministry.—Feb. 27, 1960, pp. 136-137.

"First Friends in Florida," Letter from the Past No. 182, retells the story of *God's Protecting Providence,* Jonathan Dickinson's account of Friends and others who, in 1696, after shipwreck, made their way from the Florida coast to Charleston, South Carolina.—March 19, 1960, p. 184.

Letter from the Past No. 183 is called "The End of Another Schismatic," one Charles Bayly, "heretic" in early Quakerism. After presumably leaving Friends, he traveled to Canada, serving the Hudson Bay Company for a decade as its first governor. He died in England in 1680.—April 30, 1960, pp. 281-282.

Letter from the Past No. 184, citing an article published in 1910, suggests that the site of the hanging of Mary Dyer and her companions in 1659-1660 may not be Boston Common, as tradition has held, but a place a mile away from the Common.—May 28, 1960, pp. 346-347.

The Friends' Quarterly

T. Canby Jones in "George Fox's Belief in the Trinity" shows by Fox's own words that, although he rejected belief in the Trinity as a creedal statement and spoke little of "God the Father" but much of Christ and the Holy Spirit, he was in fact a "practical trinitarian." Especially in his writings addressed to the heathen he refers in explicit terms to all three Persons, Father, Son, and Spirit.—July, 1959, pp. 112-117.

Northwest Friend

A major publishing effort, well executed, is the Special Centennial Edition, Vol. XXXIX, No. 5 (July 1959, 36 pages, illustrated). In article after article it tells the story of each phase of development of Quakerism in Oregon since the day in November 1859 when two Friends, Robert and Sarah Lindsay, carrying a minute for service from London Yearly Meeting, arrived in Portland. Later evangelists and settlers followed. A Yearly Meeting was formed. A college, schools, and foreign missions were all undertaken by Friends. The bibliography shows that much unpublished as well as published material has been used.

Quaker Religious Thought

The first issue of this new journal, organ of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group (copies available from Edward A. Manice, 380 Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut) contains an article, largely historical in character, by Howard H. Brinton on "The Quaker Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" with comments by Lewis Benson, Thomas S. Brown, and Charles F. Thomas. — Vol. I, No. 1 (Spring 1959).

Writing on "The Quaker Interpretation of the Significance of Christ," Maurice Creasey dwells chiefly on the early Quaker interpretation but discusses briefly the "bifurcation" in later Quaker thought between "inward" and "outward" interpretations. There are comments by Harold Walker, Theodor Benfey, and Douglas Steere. — Vol. I, No. 2 (Autumn 1959).